Suzy Gershman's

BORN TO SHOP NEW YORK

The Ultimate Guide for Travelers Who Love to Shop

10th Edition

WILEY
Wiley Publishing, Inc.

VISIT…



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Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of prices appearing in this book, please keep in mind that prices can change. In this edition, prices are quoted in U.S. dollars ($).

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Suzy Gershman is a journalist, author, and self-professed shopping goddess who has worked in the fashion and fiber industry for more than 25 years. The Born to Shop series, which is now 20 years old, is translated into eight languages, making Gershman an international expert on retail and trade. Her essays on retailing have been used by the Harvard School of Business; her reportage on travel and retail has appeared in *Travel + Leisure, Travel Holiday, Travel Weekly,* and most of the major women's magazines. She writes in French and English for *Air France Madame,* published by Condé Nast France. When not in an airport, Gershman can be found in Paris, Provence, or San Antonio, Texas.

Aaron James is a singer-songwriter who lives and sings in L.A.; he is also a contributing editor for Born to Shop.

Jenny McCormick is a graduate student in L.A. who works as a Born to Shop editorial assistant part-time.

TO START WITH

I guess they wouldn't call it New York if there weren't a lot that was new. In this edition, I not only try to keep up with it all, but I also incorporate a little bit of reporting from the Younger Generation . . . a couple of 20-somethings who have a few thoughts of their own.

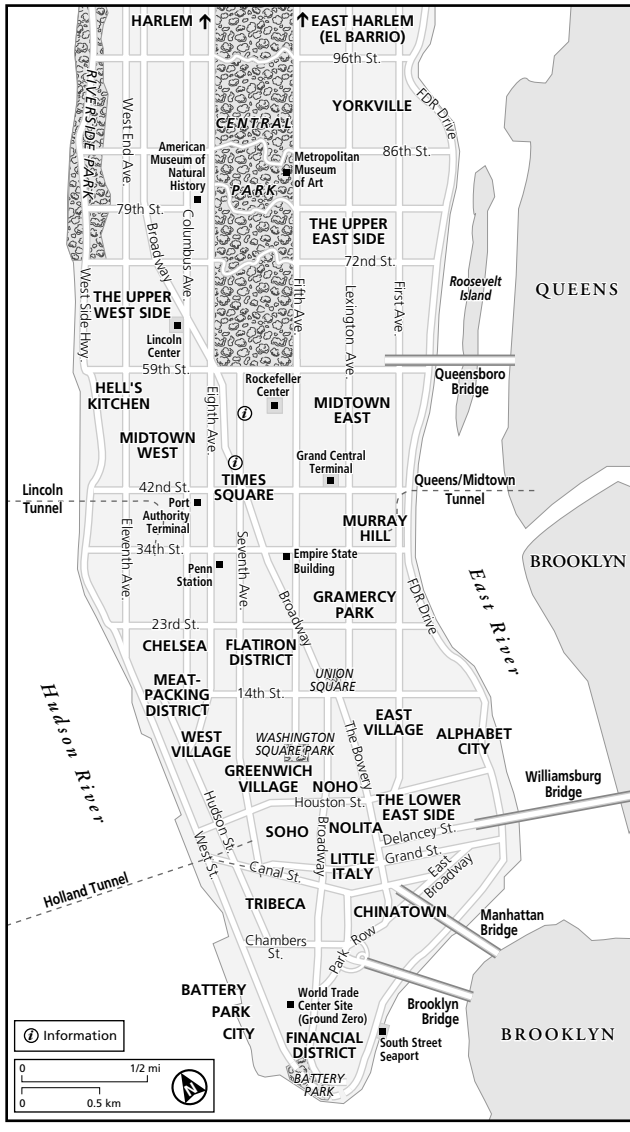
Now that I live in Paris, Provence, Texas, and assorted airports all over the world, I come to New York as a visitor—albeit an eager, excited, itching-to-shop visitor. I now have more of a European perspective on my shopping, and I also balance New York against my U.S. home in San Antonio, Texas. So I am looking for what can't be found elsewhere in the world and, as always, I'm looking for great prices. I hope you find as much as I did.

Special thanks go to Abby Hirsch, who lets me bunk with her when I am researching in New York, and to Paul Baumrind, who does a lot of cutting, clipping, calling, and schlepping on my behalf—and yours too. My friend Janet Rodgers has been sending me cuttings and websites for years; she makes her debut in these pages with her report on opening day at the Time Warner Center. Thanks also to Liz Albertson, who made these pages sing.

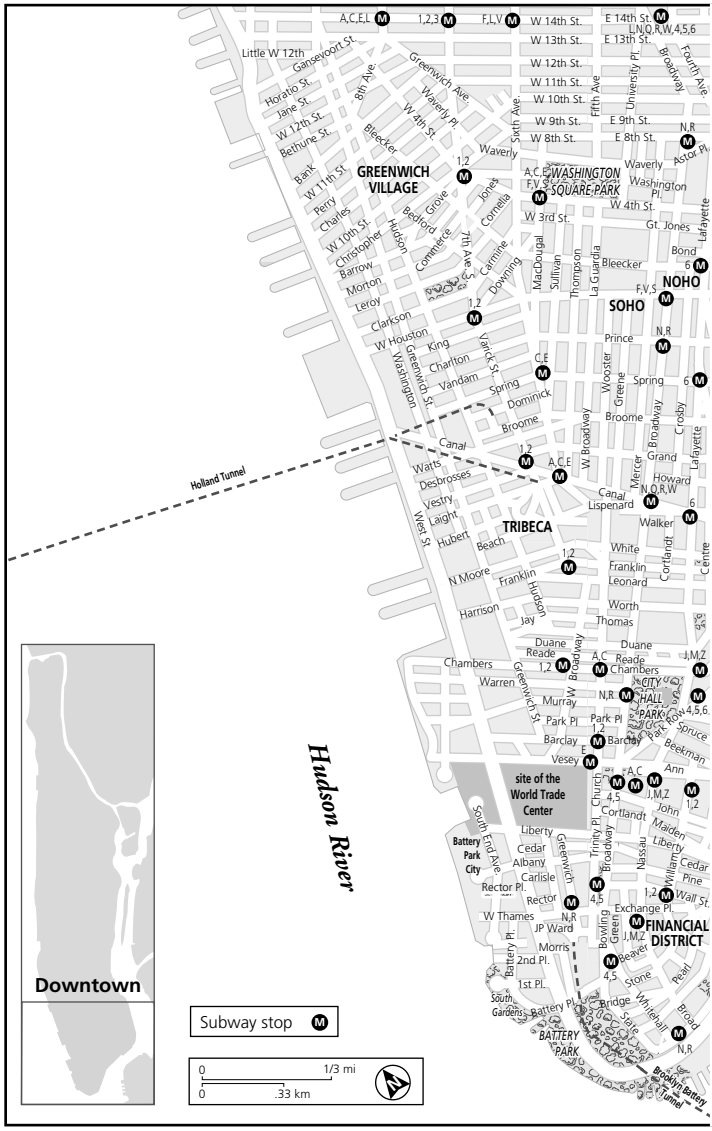
New York feels like it's coming back—the stock market is up and there's energy in the streets. September 11 is always with us, but we move on, refusing defeat, shopping our hearts out if only out of patriotism. The PATH station has reopened at the site of the World Trade Center, and Century 21, across the street, is going gangbusters. The world goes round. We go on.

If you are shopping from Europe and now use euros as your currency, lucky you. As we go to press, the euro is 25% stronger than the dollar, making most of America one big bargain for you. By the time you read this, who knows what the rate of exchange will be. My advice to you? Go get it, guys.

Manhattan Neighborhoods



Manhattan: 14th Street & Below

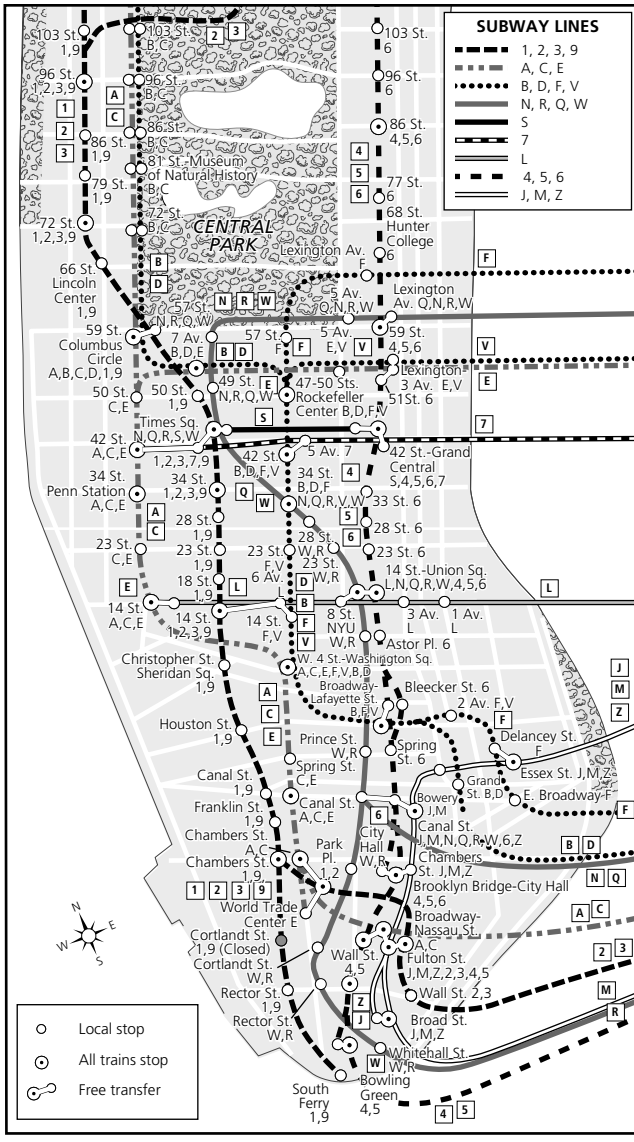

A,C,E,L
1,2,3
F,L,V
W 14th St.
E 14th St.
L,N,Q,R,W,4,5,6
W 13th St.
E 13th St.
Little W 12th
Gansevoort St.
W 12th St.
W 11th St.
W 10th St.
E 9th St.
W 9th St.
E 8th St.
W 8th St.
Horatio St.
Jane St.
W 12th St.
Bethune St.
Bank St.
W 11th St.
Perry St.
Charles St.
W 10th St.
Christopher St.
Barrow St.
Morton St.
Leroy St.
Clarkson St.
W Houston St.
Washington Sq.
Greenwich St.
Hudson St.
Bedford St.
Commerce St.
Grove St.
Jones St.
Cornelia St.
Carmine St.
Downing St.
MacDougal St.
Sullivan St.
Thompson St.
La Guardia Pl.
Varick St.
Vandam St.
Spring St.
Dominick St.
Broome St.
Canal St.
Watts St.
Desbrosses St.
Vestry St.
Laight St.
Hubert St.
West St.
Holland Tunnel
N Moore St.
Franklin St.
Harrison St.
Jay St.
Chambers St.
Warren St.
Murray St.
Park Pl
Barclay St.
Vesey St.
Liberty St.
Cedar St.
Albany St.
Carlisle St.
Rector Pl.
Rector St.
W Thames St.
JP Ward Way
Morris St.
2nd Pl.
1st Pl.
Battery Pl.
South Gardens
Battery Park City
South End Ave.
Greenwich Ave.
Waverly Pl.
W 4th St.
Bleecker St.
Waverly Pl.
Sixth Ave.
Fifth Ave
University Pl.
Broadway
Fourth Ave
Astor Pl.
Lafayette St.
Gt. Jones St.
Bond St.
Bleecker St.
Prince St.
Spring St.
Broome St.
Grand St.
Howard St.
Canal St.
Walker St.
White St.
Franklin St.
Leonard St.
Worth St.
Thomas St.
Duane St.
Reade St.
Chambers St.
Park Pl
Murray St.
Barclay St.
Vesey St.
Church St.
Cortlandt St.
Liberty St.
Trinity Pl.
Nassau St.
Pine St.
Wall St.
Exchange Pl.
Beaver St.
Stone St.
Pearl St.
Whitehall St.
Bridge St.
Broad St.
Water St.
Front St.
Gold St.
Pine St.
Cedar St.
Liberty St.
Maiden Ln.
John St.
Ann St.
Beekman St.
Spruce St.
Park Row
Centre St.
Lafayette St.
Crosby St.
Cortlandt St.
Church St.
Greenwich St.
Hudson St.
Broadway
Nassau St.
William St.
Fulton St.
Dey St.
Cortlandt St.
Fulton St.
Park Row
Chambers St.
Warren St.
Murray St.
Park Pl
Barclay St.
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Carlisle St.
Rector Pl.
Rector St.
W Thames St.
JP Ward Way
Morris St.
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Walker St.
White St.
Franklin St.
Leonard St.
Worth St.
Thomas St.
Duane St.
Reade St.
Chambers St.
Park Pl
Murray St.

East River
Williamsburg Bridge
Manhattan Bridge
Brooklyn Bridge
Brooklyn
EAST VILLAGE
ALPHABET CITY
TOMPKINS SQUARE PARK
NOLITA
LOWER EAST SIDE
LITTLE ITALY
CHINATOWN
EAST RIVER PARK
Pier 17
Pier 16
Pier 6
Vietnam Veterans Plaza
E. 12th St.
E. 11th St.
E. 10th St.
E. 9th St.
St Mark's Pl.
E. 7th St.
E. 6th St.
E. 5th St.
E. 4th St.
E. 3rd St.
E. 2nd St.
E. 1st St.
E. Houston
Stanton
Rivington
Delancey
Broome
Grand
Canal
Hester
Bayard
Division
Henry
Madison
Monroe
Cherry
Water
South
Pike
Pike Slip
Rutgers
Rutgers Slip
E. Broadway
East River Dr
Jefferson
Clinton
Montgomery
Willet
Gouverneur
Gouv. Slip
Water
Front
Jackson
Cherry
Fdr Dr
New
A. Kazan
Lewis
Bleecker
Ridge
Pitt
Attorney
Clinton
Suffolk
Norfolk
Essex
Columbia
Baruch Pl
Margin
Ave. A
Ave. B
Ave. C
Ave. D
1st Pl
2nd Pl
First Ave.
Second Ave.
Third Ave.
Stuyvesant
Bowery
Elizabeth
Mott
Mulberry
Lafayette
Crosby
Forsyth
Kenmare
Delancey
Ludlow
Orchard
Allen
Eldridge
Baxter
Worth
Frankfort
Dover
Pearl
Water
Front
Beekman
Fulton
Cliff
Platt
John
Fletcher
Maiden
Water
Front
South
South Street Viaduct
Robert F Wagner Pl
L
G
F
J,M
J,M,Z
F,V
J,M,Z
6

Manhattan: 14th Street & Above



Manhattan Subways

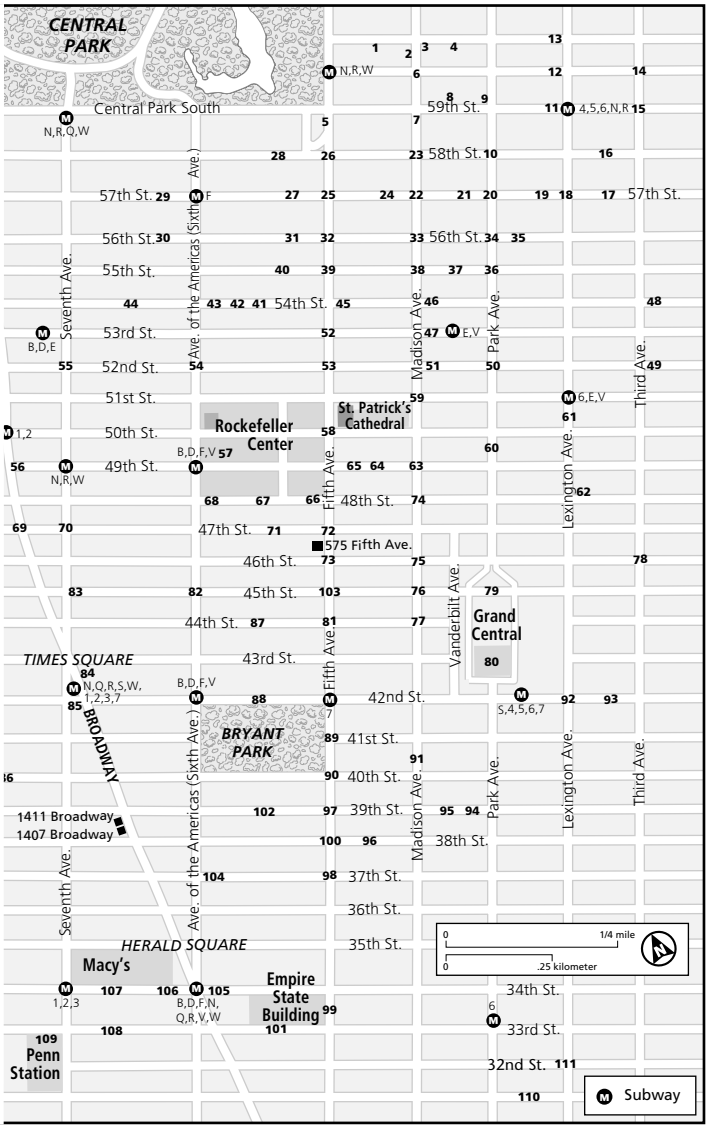


Herald Square, Garment District, Times Square, Rockefeller Center & More

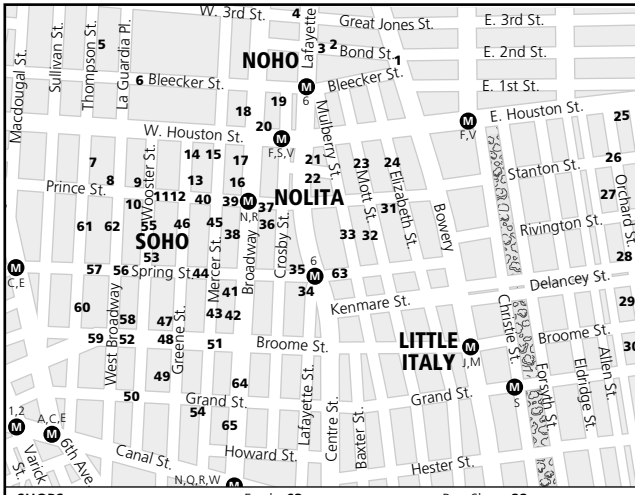
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58th St.
57th St.
56th St.
55th St.
54th St.
53rd St.
52nd St.
51st St.
50th St.
49th St.
48th St.
47th St.
46th St.
45th St.
44th St.
43rd St.
42nd St.
41st St.
40th St.
39th St.
38th St.
37th St.
36th St.
35th St.
34th St.
33rd St.
32nd St.
Seventh Ave.
Ave. of the Americas (Sixth Ave.)
Fifth Ave.
Madison Ave.
Park Ave.
Lexington Ave.
Third Ave.
Vanderbilt Ave.
Rockefeller Center
St. Patrick's Cathedral
575 Fifth Ave.
Grand Central
TIMES SQUARE
BROADWAY
BRYANT PARK
1411 Broadway
1407 Broadway
HERALD SQUARE
Macy's
Empire State Building
Penn Station
N,R,W
N,R,Q,W
F
B,D,F,V
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1,2
N,R,W
N,Q,R,S,W, 1,2,3,7
B,D,F,V
4,5,6,N,R
E,V
6,E,V
S,4,5,6,7
1,2,3
B,D,F,N, Q,R,V,W
6
0
1/4 mile
0
.25 kilometer
Subway

SoHo, NoHo, NoLita & the Lower East Side



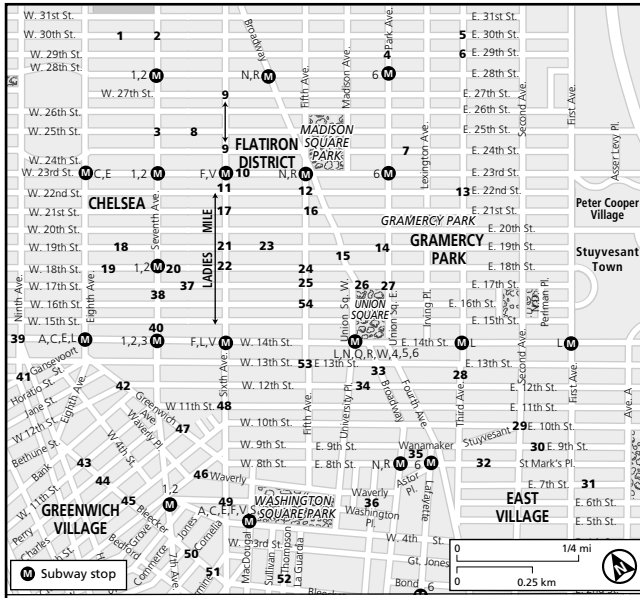
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Chapter One

THE BEST OF NEW YORK

If you are dashing about in a New York Minute, or find all the possibilities in these pages to be simply overwhelming, this at-a-glance chapter might help you to get started quickly and easily. This chapter features some easy-to-locate shops where you can find what you need if you're short on time. Each store mentioned here is explained in greater depth in later chapters, and, of course, there are plenty more shops discussed inside.

Addresses in all listings are given with cross streets so that you can find your destination more easily. When taking a taxi, tell the driver the cross streets as soon as you get in the car so there is no confusion. If you are in a hurry, the subway may be your best bet—especially for long hauls, which can get tedious (and expensive) in traffic. Never take the uptown or downtown bus when you are in a hurry unless it's an express bus; crosstown buses, however, are worth the effort.

Because of the size of the city, I have given both uptown and downtown options for some of the categories in this chapter.

Please note: I'm using 34th Street as the dividing line between uptown and downtown. This is not a traditional dividing line (many people use 14th St. or 23rd St. as the official dividing point and consider 34th St. as midtown), but I find it very handy and use it throughout this text.

Aaron & Jenny Take New York

If you are under 25, you may want to take into account the options offered up by Aaron and Jenny, which are sprinkled throughout this chapter and many others.

Here's where to go if:

YOU HAVE ONE HOUR TO SHOP

If you only have an hour to shop, your choices really depend on what part of town you're in, what your goals are, and how frequently you get to New York. Sometimes I'm willing to blow my single hour in town on something totally nontraditional, and sometimes I'm forced to look for something as specific as a matching button. But let's concentrate on location in this chapter, since time is so tight here.

The Upper East Side

I can walk from 57th Street to 79th Street along Madison Avenue in about 2 hours, poking into whatever stores interest me (but not doing serious shopping). You can do this same stroll in an hour if you stick to window-shopping. Few districts of the city give you a better overview of why New York is so special.

Middle Fifth Avenue

Do you want an hour's worth of visual stimulation and excitement or do you want to do some serious shopping? If it's inspiration you seek (and maybe not that much in terms of durable goods), poke in quickly at **Henri Bendel** (712 Fifth Ave., at 56th St.). Bendel's was heading toward bankruptcy until it changed its focus to offer lots of hip and not-so-well-known designers. At Christmas their tree is one of the best in New

York. From there, walk to West 56th Street and hang a left, going west, just a few feet to a store called **Felissimo** (10 W. 56th St.) that's filled with whimsy and wonder.

If you really need something and need it fast, do what I do and spend an hour in **Saks Fifth Avenue** (611 Fifth Ave., at 49th St.). Saks in New York is a festival unlike any other Saks in the world, but it's also a bit of a cop-out since it's very tame. I want you to have your hour in Saks, but I do hope you've got another hour to do some shopping that's more wild and crazy.

Herald Square

One hour divided between **Macy's** (Broadway, at 34th St.) and **Old Navy** (150 W. 34th St., at Broadway) should get your shopping juices flowing.

Lower Fifth Avenue or Chelsea

Take a taxi to **Jeffrey** (449 W. 14th St., near Tenth Ave.) and step on it. Walk over to **Barney's Co-op** (236 W. 18th St., near Seventh Ave.) if you have time.

SoHo/NoLita

Sure you can spend an hour breezily and easily in SoHo, but take time out and head for nearby NoLita! You'll only have time to window-shop, but you'll have a whirlwind tour of what's new and what's happening in New York retail. Head directly to **Janet Russo** (262 Mott St., near Prince St.), and then "do" all of Mott Street and NoLita.

YOU WANT TO SEE SOMETHING *VERY* NEW YORK

If you're visiting from Europe, much of American retail will seem new and fresh to you. If you're visiting from another American city, you'll find that many Manhattan versions of your favorite chain stores are bigger and better but fundamentally the same. Therefore, visiting those stores that are the epitome

of New York style (even if they have stores in other cities as well) will give you supreme pleasure, whether you buy anything or not. For those reasons, check out:

Takashimaya
693 Fifth Ave., at 54th St. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

Eileen Fisher
521 Madison Ave., at 54th St. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

ABC Carpet & Home
888 Broadway, at 19th St. (Subway: N, R, Q, W, 4, 5, or 6 to 14th St./Union Sq.).

YOU WANT TO SHOP MARKETS

Manhattan is a great city for flea markets as well as green markets (farmers markets). Market day has never been as good as a Saturday in Manhattan. You can start with the flea market on Sixth Avenue and 26th Street and then bop through myriad antiques garages and junk shops in the neighborhood before heading east to the Green Market at Union Square, which is between 14th and 16th streets, at Broadway. See p. 129 for more about these markets.

Uptown flea markets are on the West Side. Try Columbus Avenue, at 77th Street, where there's an outdoor and indoor portion to this Sunday-only market; the same folks who do the Sunday market now have a Saturday version at Columbus Avenue and 84th Street. See p. 104 for more.

YOU WANT ONE-DESTINATION SHOPPING

SoHo. No doubt about it, SoHo is changing and is bursting with new stores—some original shops and some branches of big names. If you have the energy, there are plenty of great shopping areas (lets call them SoHo Adjacent) nearby. Stores open

late (beginning at 11am, some at 11:30am), so make a day of it by adding on a dinner at one of the hot restaurants in the vicinity. The big money continues to move into SoHo (**Chanel, Louis Vuitton, Armani Casa**), so if you are looking for funky, hunt for it on the fringes. See chapter 7.

YOU WANT SOMEPLACE NEW TO DISCOVER

Way Downtown

It's NoLita for me, which is conveniently near SoHo, so if you have the time, you can shop 'em both.

Downtown

Union Square is hardly new, but now there is a new **Mexx** store there (for high fashion at fair prices for men, women, and kids). There's also the farmers market (p. 154), some fun and funky nearby stores (see chapter 7), and the subway that takes you directly to Bedford Avenue in trendy Williamsburg, Brooklyn (p. 157).

Midtown

Head for Columbus Circle and the newly opened **Time Warner Center,** which houses a hotel, a residence complex, a large mall, and a huge Whole Foods grocery store. The mall is sort of overglitzy, but many of the stores there are one-of-a-kinds or flagships units—the only **Joseph Abboud** home store, the largest **Whole Foods,** and so on.

YOU WANT ONE ADDRESS TO TELL FRIENDS ABOUT

Get your fix at **Dylan's Candy Bar** (Third Ave., at 60th St.) operated by none other than Ralph Lauren's daughter. This place has two floors of goodies and items not found anywhere else, including 24 colors of M&Ms. I would have preferred a more

old-timey Polo kind of decor instead of this moderne take on a penny-candy store, but the sweets are moving like, uh, hot cakes. There's a basement floor and plenty of gift ideas as well as an old-fashioned soda fountain.

SOMETHING FOR THE YOUNG ONES

There are a handful of **Toys "R" Us** toy stores all over Manhattan and more seem to be coming on a monthly basis. The best one is the Toys "R" Us at Times Square—you ain't seen nuthin' like this one, I promise you. I'll give you a hint: indoor Ferris wheel.

There's also **The Disney Store** (711 Fifth Ave., at 55th St.) and **The Metropolitan Museum of Art Gift Shop** at Rockefeller Center (15 W. 49th St., near Fifth Ave.), which has a wonderful kids department and is in a convenient midtown location. Nearby is the **NBC Experience** (30 Rockefeller Plaza, at 49th St.) if your kids are couch potatoes.

THE BEST PET TRICK

Sherpa Shop
Inside Crouch & Fitzgerald, 400 Madison Ave., at 48th St. (Subway: F or V to 5th Ave.).

This is where you'll find assorted travel accessories and totes for cats and dogs. Items are high quality and are sold at fair prices (most things are $100 or less). The totes are perfect for pet travel—they are approved by airlines and even buckle into your car safety belts. See p. 111.

THE BEST DOWN & DIRTY BARGAINS

It's got to be Ladies Mile (Sixth Ave., at 18th St.). And no, it's not just for ladies anymore. When the mayor of New York

rezoned this part of downtown, discounters and off-pricers quickly moved in. The Ladies Mile district now has off-pricers like **T.J. Maxx** and **Filene's Basement** (in the same building at 620 Sixth Ave., at 18th St.).

Although **Loehmann's** (101 Seventh Ave., near 17th St.) is not in this stretch, it's only a block away and should definitely be included in this neighborhood's whole. Loehmann's is hit-or-miss, but I sure hit it big on my last visit!

See p. 132 for more on this area.

THE BEST STUFF FOR YOUR APARTMENT OR HOME

You won't believe you read this here, and I can't believe I'm writing it, but here goes: the Upper East Side, mostly around the East 50s and 60s! We'll forego the James Robinson silver on Park Avenue and the original artworks in tony stores on East 67th Street and still have a good time. Move over to Madison for **Crate & Barrel** (650 Madison Ave., at 59th St.; p 268). Or head straight for **The Terence Conran Shop** at the Bridge Market under the 59th Street Bridge at First Avenue (p. 121). Nearby, there's a **Bed Bath & Beyond** at First Avenue and 61st Street (p. 120).

Not too far away, there's also a big department store at 59th Street and Lexington Avenue called **Bloomingdale's** (yep, you've heard of it before!), which has a terrific bed-linen selection that, when it goes on sale, equals discount prices. See p. 74. And for the final flourishes, head to Third Avenue for two branches of **Gracious Home** (1217 Third Ave. and 1220 Third Ave., both at 70th St.). See p. 270.

You should also check out Lower Broadway and Ladies Mile. Start at **ABC Carpet & Home** (888 Broadway, at 19th St.; p. 125) and **Fishs Eddy** (889 Broadway, at 19th St.; p. 127), then wander the side streets east of Broadway and look for the upholsterers and quiet fabric and furniture sources nestled in and around 20th Street. Or just head straight over to Ladies Mile for **Bed Bath & Beyond** (620 Sixth Ave., between 18th

and 19th sts.; p. 268). And while you're there, check out home style at **T.J. Maxx,** in the same building (p. 311).

THE BEST GIFTS

Need to pick up a few quick gifts for friends? Here are a few ideas:

- A bag of gourmet coffee from **Bloomingdale's** ($15). See p. 74.
- Bath bombs from **LUSH** ($4). See p. 237.
- Enamel plates from the **Metropolitan Museum of Art,** reprinted from Sevres patterns on tin ($7.50 each). See p. 185.
- Health, beauty, or well-being products from a brand with limited distribution—possibly unknown in your hometown, like maybe the Slatkin Body Therapy line (sold only at **Bergdorf's**). See p. 182.
- **NYPD or NYFD apparel** bought through charities that give the profits to the organizations, special memorial funds, or survivors and families of those who were victims of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. You will see this merchandise being sold on the streets for much cheaper, but if you choose to buy from these vendors, know that your money will not be reaching any charity except your vendor's pocket. The legit items are sold in stores and have a tag or sticker that notes the charities that your purchase will benefit.
- Something from **Tiffany & Co.** You can still find small leather goods, scarves, and items in sterling silver that are reasonably priced. I like the leather case that holds Post-it Notes for $30. See p. 205.
- Art or folk art from any of the museum stores—or even the street. The **Metropolitan Museum of Art** has a shop in Macy's (p. 185) and one in Rockefeller Center (p. 222).

- A gift for their pet—pet boutiques are the rage in all the major department stores and in the fancy neighborhoods (don't miss **Fetch,** in the West Village at 43 Greenwich Ave., near Charles St.). I thought the Statue of Liberty holding a dog bone was a winner at $9.

THE BEST $10 GIFTS

Let's face it: All of us have $10 friends whether we like to admit it or not. Therefore, for those who fall into this category, consider:

- Notebooks, date books, note cards, and stationery items from **The Metropolitan Museum of Art** gift shops (in the museum itself, Fifth Ave., at 82nd St.; at the Cloisters, in Fort Tryon Park; in the mid-Manhattan branch of the New York Public Library, 445 Fifth Ave., at 40th St.; and at Rockefeller Center, 15 W. 49th St., near Fifth Ave.) are in the $6.95-to-$11 price range and are useful, stylish gifts that also convey the message that you've been to New York. I just loaded up on tin plates patterned after French china; there's also a great Statue of Liberty mug.

Jenny's Five Best Buys in Brooklyn

1. Parcel "Boombox" purse: $22 at the Mini Mini-Market (MMM). See p. 138.
2. Astrological-sign drinking glasses: $7 each at Pilgrim. See p. 139.
3. "McCormick Farm Equipment" Trucker Hats: $10 at Brooklyn Industries. See p. 158.
4. Burt's Bees facial kit: $10 at the Mini Mini-Mall. See p. 157.
5. An everything bagel with butter: $1.20 at the Bagel Store, at 247 Bedford Ave. (best bagel in the 'burg).

Aaron's Five Best Buys in New York

1. Vintage Masters of the Universe T-Shirt: $8 at Beacon's Closet. See p. 137.
2. *Vice Magazine:* Free at the Vice Store. See p. 149.
3. New York Soul hoodie: $45 at the Triple Five Soul store. See p. 149.
4. Hurley jeans: $40 at Brooklyn Industries. See p. 138.
5. Studded belt: $7 from street merchant.

- Four sachets of scented bath salts in a box from **Sephora** sells for $6. See p. 238 for details and locations of Sephora stores.

THE BEST POSTCARDS

I like my postcards cheap, so I buy in multiples from the tourist traps (mostly bunched in the Times Square area); you can get 10 for $1.

If you're willing to spring for more-expensive postcards, **The Metropolitan Museum of Art** has great ones and their shop in Rockefeller Plaza (15 W. 49th St., near Fifth Ave.) is convenient for most people.

THE BEST QUICKIE SHOPPER'S LUNCH

Burger Heaven
9 E. 53rd St., between Fifth and Madison aves. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave.).

Yummy burgers. See p. 75.

THE BEST HOTEL LUNCH

The day I discovered that fancy hotels in the world's biggest and best cities can offer very competitively priced luncheons, served in restaurants that are true hidden gems, was the day I converted to eating lunches in hotels.

The Mark (Madison Ave., at 77th St.) has a great menu and a fixed-price lunch for $20, plus it's in the heart of the Madison Avenue shopping district. The **Surrey** hotel is home to **Café Boulud** (20 E. 76th St., at Madison Ave.), which also has a fixed-price lunch, at $22. **The Pierre** (Fifth Ave., at 61st St.) also has a sensational full lunch at Cafe Pierre, for around $26. See chapter 4 for more on these places.

THE BEST AFTERNOON TEA

The Pierre Hotel, Rotunda Room
Fifth Ave., at 61st St. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave., at 59th St.).

Gorgeous location. See p. 85.

THE BEST OVERALL DEPARTMENT STORE

Saks Fifth Avenue
611 Fifth Ave., at 49th St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave.).

This place has it all. See p. 186.

THE BEST STORE FOR RETAIL AS THEATER

If you've never seen one of these stores before, then New York can broaden your cultural appreciation of retail as theater. Most

of these stores play in towns all over America and often in big international cities such as London. Still, if you've never seen one, now's your chance:

DISNEY STORE
711 Fifth Ave., at 55th St. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

See p. 97.

NIKETOWN
2 E. 57th St., between Fifth and Madison aves. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

See p. 165.

TAKASHIMAYA
693 Fifth Ave., at 54th St. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

See p. 108.

THE BEST SALE

Nothing beats **Saks Fifth Avenue** (611 Fifth Ave., at 49th St.) when the sale merchandise gets marked down an additional 30% to 40%! See p. 186.

THE BEST OFF-PRICER

New York is suddenly teeming with off-pricers and discounters, so a new and better resource could pop up at any time. I left my heart at **Century 21,** which has locations in Manhattan and Brooklyn: 22 Cortlandt St. (near Church St.) in Manhattan and 472 86th St. (between Fourth and Fifth aves.) in Brooklyn. See p. 312.

THE BEST RESALE SHOPS

Try **Encore,** 1132 Madison Ave., at 84th Street (upstairs), and **Michael's,** 1041 Madison Ave., near 80th Street (upstairs). See p. 328 and 329, respectively.

THE BEST PLACE FOR A WEDDING GOWN

Filene's Basement now has its infamous Wedding Gown Sale twice a year in New York too! See p. 309.

If you time it right, you can get to the **Vera Wang Sample Sale**—usually held at the Hotel Pennsylvania. Call **✆ 212/628-3400** for the dates and details.

If you miss the sales and want to try wholesale, the best thing to do is to shop the bridal wholesale buildings in the Garment District. Try nos. 1375 and 1385 Broadway (near 38th St.). Many makers have moved out recently, but those remaining usually sell to the public.

Should you be willing to wear a used gown (of course you are), **Michael's** (1041 Madison Ave., near 80th St., upstairs) has one of the best selections in town. See p. 329.

If nothing but the full regalia will do, and your mom wants to sip tea while you try on your train, **Saks Fifth Avenue** (611 Fifth Ave., at 49th St.) has been doing this for years and remains the last of the full-service wedding belles. See p. 186.

THE BEST PLACE FOR MATERNITY WEAR

LIZ LANGE
958 Madison Ave., near 75th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

Sort of the Kate Spade of the preggers group. See p. 214.

THE BEST "REGULAR" DRUGSTORE

Manhattan is dotted with drugstores. **CVS, Duane Reade,** and **Rite Aid** are fighting it out for the hearts and minds and teeth of New Yorkers, even in the best business districts in midtown. Just about everywhere you wander you can find a branch of one or all. They carry all the basics, from a small-size bottle of water to health and beauty aids to condoms. Please note that prices on sundries in Manhattan are more expensive than anyplace else in the United States, so you'll almost always pay less at home. Unless home is overseas.

Best for beauty supplies is **Ricky's,** a beauty-supply-store-cum-drugstore that even sells wigs, jewelry, and funky gifts. There are a handful of them dotted around Manhattan in your basic popular areas such as Greenwich Village, SoHo, Columbus Circle, and even the Upper East Side. See p. 243 for more on Ricky's.

THE BEST FANCY DRUGSTORE

Clyde's
926 Madison Ave., at 74th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

Wait here please, James. See p. 117.

THE BEST HANDBAGS

I'd head straight for **J. S. Suarez** (450 Park Ave., at 57th St.) where they sell either a variety of designer-style handbags made in the same Italian factories as the big names (Gucci, Prada) or factory direct on specific Italian lines, such as Desmo. We're not talking cheap here—there's probably little for under $100—but we are talking quality and less money than at big-name stores. See p. 113.

THE BEST ELECTRONICS & BOY TOYS

J&R Computer World
15 Park Row, between Ann and Beekman sts. (Subway: W or R to City Hall)

J&R Music World
31 Park Row, between Ann and Beekman sts. (Subway: W or R to City Hall)

THE BEST MUSEUM STORE

Metropolitan Museum of Art Store
Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (Subway: 4, 5, or 6 to 86th St.).

The flagship inside the museum itself is the best, but there are five other branches around town, including one at Rockefeller Center (49th St., near Fifth Ave.). See p. 222.

THE BEST SECRET FIND

Avon Salon & Spa
Trump Tower, 725 Fifth Ave., at 56th St. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave., at 59th St.).

Avon is calling. Their first store ever—with a spa and special products—was created just for this space. Gorgeous to look at, yummy to sniff. This is your only chance to buy without making a date with your Avon Lady. See p. 235.

THE BEST OF TRENDY SHOPS

Jean-Paul Gaultier
759 Madison Ave., at 65th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

Check out the Philippe Starck decor here. See p. 118.

Jeffrey
224 W. 14th St., between Ninth and Tenth aves. (Subway: A, C, E, or L to 14th St./8th Ave.).

This place has trendsetting clothes. It may shut down, so get there soon. See p. 184.

THE BEST STORES IN NEW YORK

In alphabetical order:

ABC Carpet & Home
888 Broadway, at 18th St. (Subway: N, R, Q, W, 4, 5, or 6 to 14th St.).

Even if you buy nothing, step into this beautifully dressed showcase for tabletop, linens, fabrics, and, oh yeah, carpets. If you already know this store, note that it has changed a good bit—it's still great, but much more spare than it was. See p. 125.

April Cornell
487 Columbus Ave., at 83rd St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 86th St. or A, C, B, or D to 81st St.).

This place has home furnishings and clothes for women and little girls in swirly printed Indian fabrics that feel like the south of France. See p. 104.

Century 21
22 Cortlandt St., near Church St. (Subway: W or R to Cortlandt St.); 472 86th St., between Fourth and Fifth aves., Brooklyn (Subway: R to 86th St. in Brooklyn).

If you crave the biggest designer names at discount prices, it's worth the trip to downtown Manhattan, to Brooklyn, and maybe even the trip to New York!

Note that the Brooklyn store is better than ever (with a remodeling and a new Home Store), but whatever you do, don't drive to the Brooklyn location—especially on a weekend. Instead, take the subway.

EILEEN FISHER
521 Madison Ave., at 53rd St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave.).

Several branches around town offer droopy chic for women. Love those elastic waists! Silks and linens, bouclé wools, soft color palette a la Armani, but affordable.

KATE'S PAPERIE
561 Broadway, near Prince St. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.); 140 W. 57th St., between Sixth and Seventh aves. (Subway: F to 57th St., or N, R, or W to 5th Ave., at 59th St.).

You'll find an eye-popping choice of papers, craft items, wraps, and ribbons.

TAKASHIMAYA
693 Fifth Ave., at 54th St. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

This place has gorgeous flowers and drop-dead lifestyle designs to gawk at.

Chapter Two

NEW YORK DETAILS

BIG APPLE CIRCUS

Now that I no longer live in New York, my visits are filled with more wonder than ever before. Not only is the shopping perhaps the best in the world, but the culture is so bizarre that I feel as if I'm on another planet. It's better than a trip to the zoo or the circus.

On my last trip, people all around me were in conversations about carbs, their nannies, school auctions, dog diets, and the cost of parking in a nearby garage—some $2,000 a month (!). One of my hotels (The Mark) had a direct-line telephone button to a department store (Zitomer), and I paid $6 for a single cupcake. Through my taxi window I saw a man in the back seat of his Lexus; his driver wore a uniform, and the man was in a white shirt with red suspenders and calmly read the *Wall Street Journal* as he was ferried downtown. Civilization as I know it and can afford it has ended; there are only a handful of regular folks surviving in the New York area. The rest are superstars. And because of (and despite) all of this, New York is the most amazing city on earth.

Whether you come from Europe with a fistful of strong euros, from another large U.S. city, or from the boonies, you are in for a head-spinning trip full of opportunities. No place has more merchandise or more shopping ops than New York City; and

no single group of people is more likely to make time to go shopping and look for a bargain.

There are lots of new stores and many, many arrivals from international shores. East 57th Street, east of Fifth Avenue, has practically reinvented itself: Street vendors sell "jelly bags"—copies of the famed Hermès Birkin bag in plastic—from street corners, and secret sales and showrooms are popping up everywhere, even in people's homes.

There's also a side of retail designed to show people that the Big Apple has a big heart—many shopping ops are benefits for charitable causes. Fashion designers as well as magazines often coordinate with a worthy cause—you get to shop at special events with a portion of the revenue going to an important cause.

Read on for more on what's new.

WHAT'S NEW, PUSSYCAT

- Suburbia has invaded Manhattan. When tenants were lacking a few years ago, many of the types of stores and services that you used to find only in the suburbs moved into New York for the first time. **Red Lobster** (the cheese biscuits are to die for) opened right near Times Square, and **The Container Store** came to Ladies Mile. **Target** is rumored to be opening soon, and **Home Depot** will open during the summer 2004 at 980 Third Avenue (at 59th St.) and 40 W. 23rd Street. (between Madison and Sixth aves).
- **SoHo** (short for "south of Houston") has turned out to be uptown in a downtown location. **Ralph Lauren** has an enormous space there, and **Bloomingdale's** has just opened a small, specialty store. The area is now fancy and mainstream and has something for everyone. **Chanel** opened up in SoHo and brought **Eres,** a brand that makes very, very chic underwear and bathing suits. Armani has opened **Armani Casa** in SoHo digs. In fact, every designer in America, and some of the crowd from Europe, is now in SoHo—and on Sunday, so is every visitor. To avoid some of the

crowds, explore Lafayette Street, which stretches from SoHo to NoHo.

- **NoLita** (short for "north of Little Italy") has become the new SoHo, sort of, but it's real and small and intimate and fabulous. I'm ready to move there and open up shop. Shhhh, don't tell anyone. This is where small stores are an art form and the retailer is the curator—and maybe the designer as well.
- **The Meat Packing District,** very far west on 14th Street and into Chelsea, though still working on the smells, is fast becoming a restaurant scene while hip department store **Jeffrey** tries to hang on in the 'hood. The area has everything from art galleries to warehouse spaces to the **Comme des Garçons** boutique that marries retail with a gallery feel and redefines the borders of Chelsea. **Stella McCartney** has opened up a store here, as have other designers. So while the area is a big sprawl best shopped with car and driver, it certainly is hot.
- **TriBeCa** (short for "the triangle below Canal St.") has its first big-name retailers, **Issey Miyake** and **Baker Furniture.** In fact, over 100 new faces opened in TriBeCa just last season. Watch this neighborhood.
- **Fifth Avenue** at its midpoint has become one giant shopping mall, with a wider range of retail than ever before. You'll find this brave new shopping world right around Rockefeller Center and St. Patrick's Cathedral, with giant branch stores representing everyone from **Banana Republic** to **Kenneth Cole. Faconnable** recently moved in.
- Showbiz in the form of retail continues, and is becoming more sophisticated and refined. The most dramatic, entertainment-centered stores used to be **NikeTown** and **NBA,** but now designers are creating shops that look and feel like art galleries.
- **Columbus Circle,** considered dead for the last decade, is now the address to boast about—it's become home to a chic hotel, restaurants, apartments, offices, and a luxury shopping mall, all contained in **The Time Warner Center,** New York's

latest architectural wonder. The building anchors a hot eating and shopping district.

- **Middle Madison Avenue** (in the 40s) is getting classier—first the rebirth of Grand Central Station (with great new stores including **Oliviers & Co.** for French olive oil) and now an enormous branch of **J. Crew.**
- **Ladies Mile,** the section of Sixth Avenue where the first department stores in New York opened more than 100 years ago, has turned into superstore, discounter, and off-pricer heaven. Try the blocks from 18th to 20th streets for some rather amazing sights and for discounts for all members of the family—yep, even kids. **The Container Store** is the latest entry.
- **Times Square** is almost there. It took a while, but now that the *Condé Nast* editors are in their swanky new building, they can shop at **Virgin Megastore, Disney, Gap,** and **Sephora.** Can Banana Republic be far behind? How about Manolo Blahnik? Don't miss the **Toys "R" Us** there. Yes, I know you've seen one before, but this is an extraordinary addition to the art of retail as showbiz—there's a Ferris wheel *inside* the store!
- **West 34th Street** claims that it's been revitalized. I'm iffy on this claim but am knocked out by the **Old Navy** store, which is across the street from **Macy's,** between Broadway and Seventh Avenue.
- The city is also becoming attractive for alternate and experimental stores. Word has it that **Crate & Barrel** is looking for a space in the Meat Packing District to open their spin-off store, **CB2.**
- Stores have discovered that Manhattan is so neighborhood-oriented that they need two or more addresses—often one uptown and one downtown, or one on the East Side and one on the West Side, and sometimes even a branch in a specialty retailing district like Carnegie Hill or World Financial Center.
- Need to look, feel, or shop like a New Yorker? Log on to **www.dailycandy.com** to find out what's hot for the *Sex and the City* crowd.

THE NEW YORK RULE OF NATURAL SELECTION

New York offers more selection than any other marketplace in the United States, and probably in the world, and that includes Tokyo. (Okay, Tokyo may have more merchandise, but it won't all fit you.)

One of the things that makes New York great is the fact that you can find things here that aren't available elsewhere or haven't yet been introduced in other parts of America. Shopping in New York offers the biggest mental challenges of all time—can you bear to see this much stuff and not buy it all? Can you possibly choose the best thing for you at the best price? Shopping in New York is like living a game show.

Even though midtown is now populated by stores that you may have at home (even if home is Paris, France), the New York Rule of Natural Selection is simple: If it's new, it comes to New York first. Jelly bags started in Italy and moved across the continent (but avoided France for legal reasons) and then promptly hit the streets of New York. But they could be gone by the time you arrive. The next new thing is always around the corner.

True, consumer products are usually test-marketed in more average American cities, but once a firm has decided to go with a product, it rolls it out in New York first. It builds a flagship in New York. It decides to go for impact—in New York. That's why you'll be able to find things in New York that you can't find at home, even if you have the same stores at home.

WINDOW-SHOPPING 101

To me, the biggest bargains in New York are the education that you get from wandering around and the high that comes from absorbing so much energy and so many creative ideas.

Look at the men and women who rush past on their way to work—study what they are wearing and learn from them. Look at the store windows and displays; stare at mannequins

and even at ads in the *New York Times*. If you want to buy a piece of the action (of course you do), you'll have choices, depending upon how much you want to pay and what style of retail best fits your mood or your pocketbook . . . and depending on just how much effort you are willing to spend and how much digging you are willing to do.

The windows are easy. The bargains take work. (See chapter 11 for more on bargains.)

GETTING THERE

Because it is the international hub city of the United States, just about every domestic and international carrier and then some serves New York. The trick is to realize that there are several airports and to know that you can avoid a traffic jam or even get a bargain by using a different airport than the one everyone else is using.

John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) is the most famous airport, especially for international flights, but it's not the only game in town. **LaGuardia** serves mostly domestic flights, but it does offer action to Canada, Bermuda, and a few other destinations outside the continental United States.

Newark International in New Jersey has grown dramatically as an international hub; there is a new underground–monorail connection that can get you from Newark to Manhattan in less than a half-hour. (It works like this: You take a monorail from the airport to Penn Station in Newark and then transfer to a subway that arrives at Penn Station in New York.)

Westchester (north of the city) has its own airport, as do **Islip** (on the south shore of Long Island) and upstate New York. Upstate New York's airport, **Stewart,** wants to become an international hub to take some of the pressure off of JFK. The outer-fringe airports might not be convenient, but promotions are being offered to encourage traffic through them. Maybe you wanted to see Westchester after all?

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

A few tricks of the trade:

- For international arrivals, luggage carts are free; for domestic, they are not. Use the machine, which takes credit cards and dispenses a cart.
- There are porters at the airport, and you should pay them as you see fit—there is no fixed charge for baggage service in NYC as there is in many other cities. One dollar per bag is the going rate.
- Illegal taxi drivers will hustle you; ignore them and get in line for a real, legit New York City yellow cab.
- There are flat-rate fees for taxis to the city from JFK, but no outbound set fees. As we go to press, you pay $35 plus tolls and tip.
- There is express bus service every 20 minutes to and from LaGuardia and JFK that will drop you at a variety of hotels or at major transportation centers such as Penn Station, Port Authority, Grand Central, and so on. For more info, go online to www.nyairportservice.com. Or go to the Transportation Desk in the terminal when you arrive. There is bus service every 30 minutes from Newark; call ✆ 877/894-9155 for more information.

GETTING AROUND

There's no need to rent a car for your visit to New York City. Driving is a nightmare, and parking is ridiculously expensive (or nearly impossible in some neighborhoods). It's much easier to get around using public transportation, taxis, and your own two feet. If you're going to visit Aunt Erma on Long Island or you have some other need to travel beyond the five boroughs, call one of the major car-rental companies, such as **National** (✆ **800/227-7368;** www.nationalcar.com), **Hertz** (✆ **800/654-3131;** www.hertz.com), or **Avis** (✆ **800/230-4898;** www.avis.com), all of which have airport and Manhattan locations.

Public transportation in New York is not as civilized as it is in Tokyo or Paris, but there is a good network of subways and buses, and they are air-conditioned in summer. Buses are safe and clean. Subway travel is also relatively safe, and can be quick and efficient.

Subways

You can ask for a free subway map at the token booth of any subway station, or use our black-and-white map on p. 5. Train routes change temporarily if repairs are being made to a line, so keep an eye out for signs posted in subway stations regarding route changes. If you ask for directions to a specific shop (perhaps one that is out of Manhattan), ask if more than one train goes there.

To use the subway (and bus), buy a **MetroCard,** which is a magnetic multitrip card that is used at each gate; a $4 card buys two trips. You can buy a card and then increase the value as you go by inserting it into one of the MetroCard machines and adding money. If you buy a card for $10 or more, you receive a 20% bonus, so a $20 card actually gives you twelve trips. Even better, there's a $21 card that provides 7 days of unlimited travel. There is also a 1-day unlimited-ride Fun Pass for $7. Call ✆ **800/638-7622** from outside New York for more information or go to www.mta.info. ***Note one of the best bargains in town:*** When you pay your subway fare, you get a free bus transfer if needed.

Buses

Buses are easy to use and may feel safer than the subway. Unfortunately, they are much slower than subways. It can take an hour to get from midtown to downtown on the bus, while it will take only 10 minutes on the subway.

Buses cost the same as the subway ($2 per ride) and can be paid for with coins (exact change) or your MetroCard. ***Note:*** Word on the street is that buses will no longer accept cash at

For More Bus & Subway Information

For additional transit information, call the Metropolitan Transit Authority's **MTA/New York City Transit's Travel Information Center** at ✆ **718/330-1234.** Extensive automated information is available at this number 24 hours a day, and travel agents are on hand to answer your questions and provide directions daily from 6am to 9pm. For online information, visit **www.mta.nyc.ny.us**.

To request system maps, call the Customer Assistance Line at ✆ **718/330-3322.** Riders with disabilities should direct inquiries to ✆ **718/596-8585;** hearing-impaired riders can call ✆ **718/596-8585.** For MetroCard information, call ✆ **212/638-7622** (or 800/638-7622 outside of New York), or go online to **www.mta.nyc.ny.us/metrocard**.

You can get bus and subway maps and additional transit information at most information centers.

A particularly helpful MTA transit information desk is located at the Times Square Visitors Center, 1560 Broadway, between 46th and 47th streets, where you can also buy MetroCards. Maps are sometimes available in subway stations (ask at the token booth), but rarely on buses.

some point in the near future, so you'll have to use a MetroCard. You can get a free transfer, good for travel within 2 hours, if you take the bus. Bus routes are clearly marked on signposts, but always ask the driver to confirm that you are headed the right way. Buses can be very crowded during rush hours and are particularly slow at this time of the day due to traffic congestion.

By Foot

If you want to get someplace in a hurry, do what all locals do: Walk.

Taxis

If you just can't do the walk, try a taxi. Taxis in New York can be flagged with a raise of the hand and a flick of the wrist. If the middle light on the top of the cab is lit, the cab is available; if the outside lights on the top of the cab are lit, it is off-duty. Get into the taxi and shut the door before you give your destination. This avoids the hassle of the driver telling you he doesn't want to go where you want to go.

You have to be a little bit lucky in the rain, but taxis are expensive and therefore are not normally in high demand. There is a fee of $2.50 once you get into the cab, and then the meter starts up from there; taxi drivers expect a 15% tip. Note that the city has installed flat-rate fees for taxi service from JFK ($45) into the city but does not have a flat fee out to the airport. These flat rates do not include bridge or tunnel tolls or a tip.

Now then, I have been talking about yellow cabs, which are official taxicabs. There are also "gypsy" cabs, which are usually black town cars. Some have meters and some don't; some have TAXI on the top and some don't. I just had a dreadful, dreadful, horrible, frightening experience in one, so I remind you that you must agree on the price before you put your tush on the seat. In my case, I went from a friend's house to Grand Central Station, a route I have often done in a gypsy cab (she lives uptown) for $10 flat. When we got there, the driver said $17. I said no way. He locked me in the cab. Nice.

Car Services

While limos are standard fare in New York, you can also get a sedan to drive you around for less than a limo. And frankly, who really needs a limo? Just be sure you book through a legit car service.

Car services can be booked by the hour, by the job, or for a standard run—such as going to the airport. Please note that on hourly jobs, the clock usually starts ticking the minute the car leaves its garage; if they are snarled up in traffic coming

to pick you up, you still pay. All car services add tolls (this is most applicable to airport runs) and a tip. A 15% tip may be automatically added onto the bill, although some car services ask for a 15% tip for sedans and a 20% tip for limos.

You may want to try **Tel Aviv Car Service,** my regular. They charge a flat $35 from Manhattan to JFK and $25 to LaGuardia, not including tips and tolls. Also, their phone number is easy to memorize: ✆ **212/777-7777.** If I am traveling with my dog Sam and her stuff, they send a minivan for a flat fee of $40.

INFORMATION SOURCES

I love this one: It's called **It's Easy** (✆ **212/286-8500**). They arrange travel needs including passports, visas, passport photos, marriage and birth certificates, and many other things. You pay; they do the hard work. They are located in midtown at 125 Park Ave., between 41st and 42nd streets, which is the airline terminal building where ticket agents congregate. They have their own desk; take the escalator upstairs.

Other easy-to-deal-with and quite helpful sources are the visitor centers in some New York department stores. The one in **Bloomingdale's** sells MetroCards and phone cards, and changes international currency. These centers frequently give you a promotional gift (like a store-logo tote bag) if you bring your receipts to their office after a day's shopping. The minimum is usually $50 for the gift, but can vary from store to store. The **Saks Fifth Avenue Welcome Desk** is almost like a concierge service—they have free copies of local guide magazines like *Where* and *In New York,* which are advertising-driven but still useful.

SAFETY

New York is safer than any other big American city according to current crime statistics. While that's quite encouraging

for all of us, it's still important to take precautions. Visitors especially should be vigilant, as swindlers and criminals are expert at spotting newcomers who appear disoriented or vulnerable.

Panhandlers are seldom dangerous and can be ignored (more aggressive pleas can firmly be answered, "Not today"). If a stranger walks up to you on the street with a long sob story ("I live in the suburbs and was just attacked and don't have the money to get home" or whatever), it's likely to be a scam, so don't feel any moral compulsion to help. You have every right to walk away and not feel bad.

Be wary of an individual who "accidentally" falls in front of you or causes some other commotion, because he or she may be working with someone else who will take your wallet when you try to help. ***And remember:*** You *will* lose if you place a bet on a sidewalk card game or shell game.

DIRECTIONS

You're hot to trot, but please, study up on your New York neighborhoods before you pounce (map on p. 6). You'll also need a few tips that, once learned, will help to keep you from getting lost.

Most of Manhattan is laid out on a grid system, with clearly distinguishable north, south, east, and west points. Look at any map to see the basics. Avenues run north and south, and

Never Be Shy About Asking for Directions

New Yorkers may look like they're always in a rush, but most are such incurable know-it-alls that they're always happy to tell you where to go. Even lifelong Manhattanites can get disoriented when emerging from a subway station, so verifying that you're headed the right way doesn't necessarily brand you as a visitor.

Electronic Travel Tricks

Many PDA systems (personal digital assistant) have a global positioning system—you can buy a New York insert or buy a PDA with one already installed.

streets run east and west. Fifth Avenue divides the East and West sides (building numbers begin at 1 from Fifth Ave. for both the East and West sides), so the location of many addresses can be deduced from the number of the building and the word East or West in front of the street address.

In many places in the world, downtown is a specific place. Not in Manhattan. In Manhattan all directions are given in reference to where you are standing and where you are going: Uptown is north and downtown is south. North and south are not much used by visitors, or in directions, but locals will use north, south, east, and west to tell taxis to stop on the corner of the block that's closest to their destination.

If you are looking for a specific address on a numbered street (not an avenue), the even numbers are on the south side of the street and the odd numbers are on the north side of the street.

Generally speaking, an avenue divides each block of streets. The street numbers within each street block leap by 100 when you move to the next block. There are notable exceptions, however, such as when you advance east from Fifth Avenue to Madison Avenue (the street numbers only go to 50) and again when you move from Madison Avenue to Park Avenue (the next 50 numbers come before Park Ave.).

If you are at all concerned about where a shop or address may be, call first for directions. Ask for the cross streets and you'll get the avenues and the street numbers to know exactly where in the grid of Manhattan you will be going. There are a few parts of Manhattan that do not work on a grid, but you can spot them on a map. (They're mostly at the tip of the island, but the Village can also be rather tricky.)

Finding Cross Streets

To figure out a cross street on your own, there is a system that really does work.

A warning about the system: It looks hard, elaborate, and confusing. You will take one glance at this information, curse, and turn to another page. Big mistake. The system isn't as hard as it looks.

Crosstown streets first, because they're the easiest:

- From Eleventh Avenue to Tenth Avenue, addresses run from 599 West to 500 West.
- Tenth Avenue to Ninth Avenue: 499 West to 400 West.
- Ninth Avenue to Eighth Avenue: 399 West to 300 West.
- Eighth Avenue to Seventh Avenue: 299 West to 200 West.
- Seventh Avenue to Sixth Avenue (Avenue of the Americas): 199 West to 100 West.
- Sixth Avenue (Avenue of the Americas) to Fifth Avenue: 99 West to 1 West.
- Fifth Avenue to Madison Avenue and Park Avenue: 1 East to 99 East.
- Park Avenue to Lexington Avenue: 100 East to 140 East.
- Lexington Avenue to Third Avenue: 140 East to 199 East.
- Third Avenue to Second Avenue: 200 East to 299 East.
- Second Avenue to First Avenue: 300 East to 399 East.
- First Avenue to York Avenue: 400 East to 499 East.
- Above 59th Street, Eleventh Avenue becomes West End Avenue, Tenth Avenue becomes Amsterdam Avenue, Ninth Avenue becomes Columbus Avenue, and Eighth Avenue becomes Central Park West.
- Numbers on crosstown streets up to the top of Central Park, at 110th Street, begin with 1 West at the corner of Central Park West, and go up as you head west (addresses from 100 West begin at Columbus Ave., from 200 West at Amsterdam Ave., and so on).

To locate the nearest avenue to an address on a street, follow this easy step-by-step process:

- Look at the address of the building where you are going—for example, 725 Fifth Avenue, the Trump Tower. If you are bad at math or can't visualize numbers, write down the number on a piece of scrap paper.
- Drop the last digit of the building's number. You are now working with the number 72.
- Divide this number in half. That puts you at 36.

Using the list below, add or subtract the number given. ***Note:*** There are a few exceptions. You do not divide in half numbers between 775 and 1286 on Fifth Avenue. As this area is residential, it shouldn't pose a problem to shoppers using this system. Two other residential areas, Central Park West and Riverside Drive, do not fit into this plan at all, but again, this shouldn't inconvenience a shopper.

Avenues A, B, C, and D	Add 3
First Avenue	Add 3
Second Avenue	Add 3
Third Avenue	Add 10
Fourth Avenue	Add 8
Fifth Avenue:	
Up to 200	Add 13
Up to 400	Add 16
Up to 600	Add 18
Up to 775	Add 20
From 775 to 1286	Do take off the last digit, but do not divide by 2. Then, subtract 18.

Sixth Avenue (Avenue of the Americas)	Subtract 12
Seventh Avenue:	
Up to 1800	Add 12
Above 1800	Add 20
Eighth Avenue	Add 10
Ninth Avenue	Add 13
Tenth Avenue	Add 14
Eleventh Avenue	Add 15
Amsterdam Avenue	Add 60
Broadway:	
Below 754	(see below)
754 to 857	Subtract 29
858 to 958	Subtract 25
Above 958	Subtract 30
Columbus Avenue	Add 60
Lexington Avenue	Add 22
Madison Avenue	Add 26
Park Avenue	Add 35

For Broadway addresses below 754, this little chart will help:

1	Battery Place
100	Wall Street
200	Fulton Street
300	Chambers Street
400	Canal Street
500	Broome Street
750	East 8th Street
1000	23rd Street

The Trump Tower, our example here, is at 56th Street by these calculations—and that's just where it is!

ONLINE & PRINT GUIDES TO NEW YORK

If you are tempted to buy a lot of guidebooks about the city—don't. ***Frommer's New York City*** is a great tool to help you navigate the city. It includes hotel and restaurant listings,

Site-Seeing: The Big Apple on the Web

The New York Convention & Visitors Bureau's official site, **www.nycvisit.com**, is an excellent online resource offering tons of information on the city. But there's much more to be learned about New York in cyberspace than just the official line.

Citysearch (**www.newyork.citysearch.com**) is the city's hippest, most comprehensive, and most up-to-date general-information site, with reviews and listings for restaurants, shopping, hotels, attractions, and nightlife.

New York Today (**www.nytoday.com**) is the online arts, leisure, and entertainment arm of the venerable *New York Times*. You'll find events listings, including museum schedules and sports events, plus the *Times*'s definitive restaurant reviews.

About.com maintains a useful New York page at **www.gonyc.about.com**, hosted by an insightful and opinionated local expert.

Digital City New York (**www.digitalcity.com/newyork**) is much like Citysearch but not quite as comprehensive or quick on the uptake. Still, it's good for an alternative view.

Each of the city's high-profile weeklies also maintain useful sites, including *Time Out New York* (www.timeoutny.com), the *Village Voice* (www.villagevoice.com), *New York Magazine* (www.newyorkmetro.com), and the *New Yorker* (www.newyorker.com).

attraction details, walking tours, and nightlife descriptions. The **free package from the New York City Convention & Visitors Bureau (www.nycvisit.com)** is a good resource as well. Then, think about purchasing a *Zagat*'s dining guide (the listings are based on readers' experiences, not those of restaurant critics) or one of the *Zagat Dining Maps*.

In your search for up-to-date and basic information, check out ***Where*** magazine, which should be distributed free in your hotel. *Where* is also handed out free of charge at the customer service desk on the first floor of Saks Fifth Avenue, near the side door across from St. Patrick's. Besides listing the expected tourist information, *Where,* published every month, announces the big fashion shows, designer house shows, antiques sales, public sales, and auctions. Sometimes there are coupons for discounts in the magazine. Don't panic if a favorite store or restaurant isn't included in *Where;* the magazine features only paying clients. Nonetheless, it's a valuable source.

Want a guide to the area sample sales and warehouse deals? Try the ***S&B Report,*** which you can buy by the single issue if you write or call ahead. See p. 326.

There's also a weekly column of sales and bargains in ***New York Magazine*** and ***Time Out New York***—a sister of the British publication.

SHOPPING HOURS

As the town that never sleeps, New York prides itself on having some retail services available on a 24-hour basis. Not at Bloomingdale's, mind you, but there are some stores open whenever you may need them.

Regular retail hours are roughly 10am till 5:30 or 6pm, Monday through Saturday. Thursday is the late night, with stores usually open until 9pm. But irregular is often the rule, so you should call ahead to make sure. Here are some guidelines:

- Stores in business areas, such as Wall Street, tend to open rather early in the morning to service locals on their way to work. Stores often open at 7:30 or 8am on weekdays and are frequently closed on Saturday and Sunday.
- Power chains with enough money and staff often keep their stores open more nights of the week or later every night of the week. **Barney's** in midtown is open until 9pm 6 nights a week.
- Midtown stores that sell business apparel usually open at 9am. ***Beware:*** Stores that open at 9am may close at 5 or 5:30pm.
- Monday and Thursday are traditional late nights for department stores, which stay open until 9pm. If a store has only 1 late night per week, it is Thursday night.
- Bookstores seem to have their own rules about hours, especially now that certain bookstores have become the substitute for the village green and have entire neighborhood social patterns revolving through their doors. Some are even open until midnight.
- During Christmas season, anything goes.
- In summer, fancy stores (such as Madison Ave. boutiques) close at noon on Saturday or don't even open on Saturday at all.
- Most stores close earlier on Saturday evening than during the workweek, be it at 5 or 5:30pm, maybe 6pm. Few stay open until 9pm on Saturday. There are exceptions; this is just a general rule for traditional retail.

Sunday Shopping

I can't go so far as to say everything is open, but Sunday is a huge day for retail in Manhattan. Certain neighborhoods have a big social-retail-dining scene, like **SoHo** and the **Upper West Side.** Locals go out for brunch and then go shopping.

Not only are all major department stores and chains open on Sunday, but the hours that they are open also seem to be extending. While regular Sunday hours seem to be noon until 5pm, the opening times are creeping earlier and earlier. Many stores open at 11am now, and a few even open at 10am.

Religious Hours

Please note that stores owned and operated by observant Jewish people may have special hours; they will close at 2pm on Friday and remain closed throughout Saturday. They then reopen first thing on Sunday morning. This is true of many stores on the Lower East Side as well as specific stores here and there.

Holiday Hours

If it's a shopping holiday (like Christmas), look for extended hours. If it's summer, look for retracted hours—many stores close on Saturday during the summer season. Do note that more and more stores need cash and will do whatever it takes to keep the electricity on, so store hours are becoming more flexible (and extended).

Funky Hours

Now that so many funky neighborhoods have become "in," a whole new set of operating hours is coming into style. Most downtown stores (SoHo, NoLita, and the others) open at 11am and stay open until 8pm. They may open at 10am on Saturday, but then again, they may not.

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS: PRIVATE SALES

There is enormous business being done privately in Manhattan and in other cosmopolitan cities in the world. People with taste, a little money, and a few friends are pursuing their personal interests and selling from their collections on a private basis. They usually sell out of their homes, which is why their numbers and addresses are kept quiet.

While there are a few clothing and accessories people who operate this way, the bulk of the business is in antiques and collectibles—especially items picked up at markets around the world and brought in on an individual basis. If you have an

area of interest, ask dealers if they can recommend any private resources who might help out. You'll need an appointment after that and usually the name of your connection before you'll get the address.

BAD BUYS OF NEW YORK

There are people who will tell you that anything you buy in New York that costs full retail is a bad buy, but I'm not one of them. I think that the things to avoid are the things you can buy at home at much cheaper rates, such as dry-cleaning services, some makeup, vitamins, and pantyhose.

Computers, electronics, and cameras may be available for less in your hometown if you live in a major U.S. city. I have done some rather extensive electronics research for this edition and have discovered the basic operating ploy for the midtown Fifth Avenue and even Sixth Avenue electronics stores that seem to be offering such incredible deals: The system is that they do their pricing based on prices for those goods in Europe and Japan and in the world's most expensive duty-free stores. That way, the prices seem like bargains to international visitors, even though they're not compared to other U.S. prices. Visitors often buy without realizing that there are several good and honorable firms in New York where you can get good service, good prices, and good value. These midtown stores survive because the people who frequent them often live out of town and may never come back to New York again to complain or because people don't know that they can do much better. Don't get taken.

PERSONAL/SPECIAL SHOPPERS

Large New York stores offer many free services to help busy people with their shopping. If you've ever been on one of those whirlwind business trips where you mean to get out for a few minutes to your favorite store but you never make it, a

personal/special shopper may work wonders for you. Every department store in Manhattan has a shopping service that will run errands for you and mail out your purchases (from that store only) or will pull together everything you want to look at and have it ready for you to peruse on an appointment basis at your convenience.

A special shopper will work the entire store with you, helping to coordinate your outfits or put together table settings for a dinner party or plan your wedding—although most stores have special wedding consultants for the bride-and-groom part. Or a special shopper will pick clothes *for* you and then invite you into the store to try them on. They can even bring them to your home if you don't like to go to stores or if you have time constraints.

A special shopper is available with a store translator if you would prefer to work in a language other than English. Make an appointment and specify what language you will be speaking.

You should not pay extra for the services of a shopper, since they are employees of the department store. Special shoppers will not use outside resources for your buying, and they won't tell you where to get bargains or discounts. They may give you fashion tips and point you toward a good buy, but their job is to sell the store's merchandise. This service is not just for women—many men also use special shoppers.

CHARGE & SEND

If you are on a mad shopping spree, your concierge can call a messenger to pick up your packages at the stores and deliver them to the hotel on the same day. The charges are computed by distance.

Most department stores have shopping services that will deliver to your hotel room for you. Department stores will also usually mail-order any item you see advertised in the newspaper. Many of the more fancy boutiques (such as **Chanel**)

offer a shop-by-phone system as well, and many have online services.

Stores will happily send a package to any address for you—but they'll probably pull out a zone chart and bill you a flat fee for the packing, wrapping, and mailing. Insurance is probably not included; ask specifically if you'd like to have it. Technically, mail costs should be charged by weight and distance—but many stores guess at the weight and charge you a flat fee for the whole works. Snap it up. Stores traditionally ship merchandise by **United Parcel Service (UPS),** which takes several days depending on your delivery zone. Many stores also have a deal with **Federal Express (FedEx),** which offers next-day or second-day delivery. If you are making a large purchase that will involve a good hunk of change in sales tax, consider shipping, if it is an option, to save you money. Every now and then, a store will provide free FedEx shipment. I bought a gizmo over the phone (to avoid sales tax) and they sent it to me via FedEx for no charge. I was impressed.

If you are an international visitor who will be in several different U.S. cities, consider using FedEx to get purchases to you in another state. Interstate shipping is a good way to avoid sales tax, since big-ticket items that are shipped out of state are not charged New York sales tax.

Although the U.S. Postal Service still works, you may prefer to rely on private mail services and 1- or 2-day delivery services. The U.S. Postal Service offers such a service, called **Express Mail,** which promises next-day or second-day delivery. There's also **Priority Mail,** which is good for small packages. You can use these services yourself through any post office.

NEW YORK SALES TAX

This one is tricky, as it has changed several times in the last few years. Forget everything you knew or thought, here's the skinny as we go to press:

In order to pay for damages resulting from the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the city has raised sales tax: Items are taxed at a relatively high 8.63%. Note that some people shop in New Jersey or Pennsylvania specifically to avoid New York sales taxes, as taxes there can be less or nonexistent. You can also avoid sales tax through postal tricks (see above).

Manhattan has 2 tax-free weeks a year (usually one in Jan and one in June) when sales tax is waived.

There are no refunds on tax (VAT) for international visitors.

MAIL ORDER & CATALOGS

Mail-order retailing can be a great way to shop the glories of New York without actually being here. Even people in New York, especially those too busy to make it to the stores, do this all the time. These days, retail space is very expensive, and it is becoming harder and harder for stores to make money, so some places that had stores have closed their shops and only sell through retail catalogs. If an old favorite of yours has closed shop, check to see if perhaps they now have a mail-order or catalog business.

Some department stores will put you on their catalog list automatically after a purchase, or you can pay for a catalog (often redeemable toward purchase). Saks even has a special club of catalog and shopping offers for people who spend $2,000 per year. In the months before Christmas, you can make the rounds of midtown retailers and put together a catalog collection. Usually, if you just ask nicely at any time of year, you can get a free catalog. Many women's magazines have order forms for the super-fancy catalogs, but you must pay for these.

I find that ads in the *New York Times* and catalogs often showcase merchandise that I simply wouldn't find on my own in a store. If you see the ad in the newspaper, call the mail-order number provided, supply a credit card number, and get the item delivered to your hotel. I once browsed the **Crate & Barrel** catalog, saw something I liked, went to the store, and

couldn't find it in person. It took a sales clerk to locate this item. Meanwhile, another sales clerk got out a calculator to see if the in-store price or the catalog price was a better deal. Now that's service.

Should you see something you want in a store catalog, know that most have 2-day delivery deals, so be sure that your order will get to you before you leave town.

There are some stores that are outgrowths of their catalog business; a few of these even have European distribution deals. Check out **J. Crew, Eddie Bauer, FAO Schwarz, Victoria's Secret, Hammacher Schlemmer, Brookstone,** and **Orvis.** Most of the big companies do international shipping. And yes, they will take off the state sales tax on international mail orders.

Chapter Three

SHOPPING TIPS FOR INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

THROUGH MY EYES

Now that I spend a large portion of the year living in France, my visits to the U.S.—and especially New York City—are giant shopping sprees, preceded by days or weeks of list-making and dreams of American bargains.

There are wonderful things to buy in Europe, and I do indeed write an entire series of books about those items, but no one makes or merchandises low-cost merchandise like the U.S. The cost of living—and living well—in Europe is less expensive than in New York, but with the euro as strong as it is right now, shopping with dollars becomes a real treat.

There may be financial problems all over the world, but there's always a bargain in New York. Step this way, *venez par ici.*

American Retail

American retailers sell at every point along the price spectrum in order to get their products to people of all socioeconomic backgrounds. Sometimes the exact same merchandise is sold in different packaging or with different labels at different prices. The U.S. also offers a wide number of sales, promotional events, and outlet stores (see chapter 11).

Come Sale with Me

Country governments usually control European sales, and though European sales are very nice, they do not compare with American ones, where the intent is to clear out all the merchandise before the store has to give it away. Visitors from abroad will be amazed by the promotional events that bring super-low prices in the U.S. You should seriously consider flying to New York for the summer or after-Christmas sales.

Welcome to Deal City

Yes *(sí, oui, ja, da),* if you are visiting from another country, there are plenty of tips throughout this guide; believe me, this isn't the only chapter to read. Of course, I want you to read the whole book, but be sure to see the chapter on bargains (chapter 11) and the information on factory outlet villages (such as **Woodbury Common**) to learn some tricks of the retail trade so that you go home with a smile on your face and an extra piece of luggage!

Remember, excess baggage from the U.S. to your home destination is in most cases charged by the unit, not the size or the weight. One extra piece of luggage outward bound is usually charged about $100; this can be one of the best investments of your trip. If the shopping is going well and you can pack more than $100 worth of savings into an extra suitcase, it may be worth expanding your horizons. The bad news: You may have to pay duty on your purchases when you return to the EU . . . a situation made worse if you have extra luggage crammed with evidence of your shopping spree.

Cash on Demand

If you don't have any U.S. dollars in your wallet, don't fret. They are expensive if you buy them at a cambio in Europe or Canada, so wait until you get to the airport at your U.S. port of entry and use your bank card there. Then go to a shop and buy a newspaper or a candy bar and get change in $1 bills. *The $1 bill is your key to tipping in the U.S.*

If you plan to ride the bus, you will need a MetroCard or exact change in coins. Get coins if you suspect you will need them for fares.

ARRIVING IN NEW YORK

Most international travelers come to the Big Apple via John F. Kennedy (JFK) International Airport or Newark Airport in New Jersey. LaGuardia Airport gets arrivals from Canada.

Of these three airports, JFK has the most international traffic and therefore is the most congested and most likely to be confusing; Newark is a lot newer and, I think, easier to use. JFK has become infamous for its scams on travelers who do not know enough about New York to know they are being cheated. While police have cracked down to try to protect international visitors, you sometimes don't know you're in trouble until it's too late. Therefore, a few tips:

Luggage Carts

In international terminals, they are free.

Skycaps

If you page a skycap to help you with your luggage, there is no predetermined fee as there is in many European airports or train stations. You tip at your own discretion. The norm is $1 per bag.

Getting a Taxi at the Airport

Ignore all drivers who approach you and offer you a ride; this includes well-dressed limo drivers or people with "honest" faces. Use only a yellow, licensed taxi. When you get into your taxi, take out a pen and paper and copy down your taxi driver's name, shield number, and the name of the cab company. Make sure he or she sees you doing this little ritual. The New York

City Taxi and Limousine Commission states that a driver's license will be revoked if he or she is caught overcharging a passenger by more than $10.

There is now a fixed price for taxis into the city from JFK: $35. This fee does not include the tip or bridge and tunnel tolls. The fixed-price situation does not work in reverse; you pay the meter price in a taxi from the city to any of the airports.

Other Ground Transportation

There is public transportation from each airport into Manhattan and to the suburbs. Go to the Ground Transportation desk, located across from the baggage carousels or in the lobby outside of U.S. Customs after arrival. You have your choice of buses, subway, or private transport companies to take you into the city and suburban areas of the tri-state area (New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut).

BUYING AMERICAN SIZES

For a conversion chart of U.S., Continental, and British clothing and shoe sizes, see the inside back cover of this book.

Also note that towels and bed linens in the U.S. rarely match their Continental or British counterparts, but may work with some successful juggling or recalculating.

It helps to bring a tape measure with you that has metric measurements on one side and the U.S. measuring system on the other. My friend Ruth, who lives in London, says an American queen-size sheet fits two British twin beds pushed together.

Meanwhile, when it comes to clothing styles, you should know that a European cut is different from an American one; that Far Eastern sizes are often scaled to the petite; and that size charts are a beginning but nothing to bet on—always try clothes on and go by fit, not by label.

There are various names for sizes and types of cuts in the U.S. For example, size charts usually refer to women's sizes in

even numbers—sizes 4, 6, 8, 10, and so on. They don't tell you that in America we also have junior sizes, sometimes called misses sizes, which are sizes 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, and so on. Misses sizes are usually a tad shorter, rounder, and roomier in the bust, and should not be confused with petite sizes, which usually have a P next to the size number and are proportionately smaller all over.

Large sizes for women come with a variety of names, from "queen size" to "women's size" to "plus size" to simply 1X, 2X, 3X; see p. 224 for more information. In addition to sizes that are written as S (small), M (medium), and L (large), there are also usually XL for extra-large and sometimes XXL for extra-extra-large.

Men's sizes are found up to about size 44, or maybe 46, in regular stores; after that you need a store for "big and tall men" (p. 224).

FRAGRANCE DIFFERENCES

Fragrances in the United States, even when labeled "Made in France," are made with denatured alcohol rather than with potato alcohol, which is the base for European perfumes. This type of alcohol may wear differently on your skin, even if the scent in the bottle smells the same. Huh?

It all has to do with the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) and what it will allow onto U.S. shores. For this same reason, many shades of cosmetics are different in the United States and other parts of the world. They may or may not bear the same color name, number, or designation.

ELECTRONIC DIFFERENCES

Despite the number of stores that sell low-cost DVDs and videos—to say nothing of street vendors who offer up illegal

copies of the same—there are several things to watch out for: the difference in voltage and in current as well as in DVD zones and even TV types. Most newer-model European TVs play NICAM and NTSC. Do not buy videos unless you know for sure that your TV plays NTSC or you are willing to invest in a new set.

See "Gadget Lowdown," later in this chapter, for more information.

CLOTHING COLOR DIFFERENCES

Global marketing has brought brand names from their countries of origin to stores all over the world, and colorations are geared for specific markets—European colors for Gap are often darker than U.S. colors. Don't be surprised if you find styles or color groups in the U.S. that are not available in Europe.

Colors in fashion will usually match from same-season collections, but colors may not match if the goods were made, or dyed, in different parts of the world.

As I mentioned before, shades of makeup can have the same code numbers throughout the world and yet still be different colors in different parts of the world. In fact, many cosmetics colors don't match up at all!

If you're not flexible, don't buy in the U.S.

PRICES IN NEW YORK

Most international visitors to New York are so dazzled by the price tags at regular retail that they fail to understand the concept of bargain shopping—to realize that there are places where you can get the same, or similar, merchandise for less money.

The first step toward getting a bargain is to create a list of target acquisitions and their prices and availability at home.

List the regular retail prices and check out convenient bargain resources, alternative retail (such as resale shops), and factory outlets.

Value-Added Tax (VAT) & Sales Tax

European shoppers may at first be shocked that the ticketed price on an item in the United States is not the final price, so an advance warning: Once you go to the cash register, *taxes are added on.*

Unfortunately, the United States does not presently have a value-added tax (VAT) or an export-tax program. We may get one, but we haven't got it now. International visitors are required to pay the state sales tax and cannot get a refund on this money when they leave the country. Sorry, I know that doesn't sound very fair, but that's the way it works.

Sales tax varies from state to state. Some states have no tax on clothes (Pennsylvania), no tax on clothing items up to $50 (Connecticut), or no tax at all (New Hampshire). New York happens to have one of the highest sales taxes anywhere in the United States, currently at 8.63%.

Trick: If you are visiting a variety of states in your U.S. tour, you can send an item from a Manhattan store to your hotel in your final destination state (allow at least a week for delivery) and therefore avoid state sales tax. If you need fast delivery, you can pay for **FedEx** or **UPS** delivery service to your next destination. Don't laugh. If it's a small high-end item (such as a piece of jewelry or a small electronic gadget), it may pay to have the item sent to you in another state. If the store sends it out, there should not be any tax, but ask first, because in some cases (when the store has a branch in the state to which you wish to mail something), tax will be added. To see if this tax-dodge is worth the trouble, check to see if the retailer includes insurance during the shipping (usually furriers do) or what the cost of insurance will be. Also. remember that Federal Express insures items for no more than $100.

It is considered rude to ask a store to mail you an empty box to an out-of-state address. Years ago, jewelers and furriers did it all the time. No more. Don't even think about it.

Some stores are very conscious of the fact that the United States has no VAT refund, and go out of their way to give a discount to international visitors. **Conway** (p. 307) does this—just show your passport at the time of purchase. Ask at other stores.

MONEY-CHANGING

One of the best bets is to buy traveler's checks in U.S. dollars before you leave home. Although there is usually a fee for doing this, it allows you to freeze your rate of exchange at the time of purchase.

Some stores and businesses will accept Canadian currency at an automatic (and possibly unfair) discount rate; few stores will accept other foreign currency. **Bloomingdale's** has a foreign exchange office within their store; it's right next door to its American Express Travel Services office, open Monday through Saturday from 10am to 6pm, Thursday until 8pm; closed Sunday.

While you can change funds at airports and most banks, there are several services in midtown that specialize in money exchange and international traveler's checks. Most are open 7 days a week:

American Express
374 Park Ave., at 53rd St. (Subway: E, V, or 6 to Lexington Ave./51st St.); 1185 Sixth Ave., at 47th St (Subway: B, D, F, or V to Rockefeller Center); other locations.

Chequepoint
22 Central Park S., between Fifth and Sixth aves. (Subway: R to 5th Ave./59th St.); 1568 Broadway, at 47th St. (Subway: R to 49th St.); 551 Madison Ave., at 55th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.); and 820 Second Ave., at 44th St (Subway: 4, 5, 6, 7, or S to Grand Central).

THOMAS COOK CURRENCY SERVICE
1590 Broadway, at 48th St. (Subway: R to 48th St.); 317 Madison Ave., at 42nd St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, 7, or S to Grand Central); 1271 Broadway, at 32nd St. (Subway: B, D, F, N, Q, R, V, or W to 34th St./Herald Sq.); other locations.

Global use of international banking systems is not yet here; a British friend who uses Nat West in London had no luck in a branch of Nat West on Fifth Avenue when trying to transfer dollars to his account.

If you travel to the United States frequently and stockpile cash, you may want to keep track of what you paid for your money. With currency fluctuations, you may find it smarter to sit on your cash and convert new funds, or to rely mostly on credit cards for a better rate of exchange.

INTERNATIONAL MAILING & SHIPPING

If you've bought more than you can carry home, you may want to send some packages overseas. The small-package airmail rate is the least expensive and has minimal paperwork. Once you get into big or heavy packages, however, it does get more expensive, especially if you send by airmail. Even surface mail (which is by sea) gets expensive if the item is large or heavy.

For surface mail to Europe or Asia, figure 6 to 8 weeks before your package will arrive; for airmail, about 1 week. Various courier services carry overnight mail around the world, although with time changes and the international dateline, the service is rarely overnight. It will take 2 to 4 days, depending on the destination. (Too bad you can't fax yourself a sweater!) The U.S. Postal Service does have 3-day international airmail that is similar to courier service but is less expensive.

The biggest problems with shipping are not American prices or laws, but laws on the receiving end—many people cannot afford the duty on the gifts that you send them. You could always

ship your old, dirty, travel-worn belongings home and pack your new purchases in your luggage.

Note: It is usually less expensive to pay for an additional piece of luggage as excess baggage when you fly home than to ship a package home.

POSTCARDS

Postcards are sold just about everywhere; the best prices are on those sold in minibulk from touristy electronics shops in midtown. These stores sell cards at three for $1 on Fifth Avenue in the 50s; six for $1 on Madison Avenue in the 40s; and 10 for $1 on Broadway in the 40s, on West 34th Street, and on Fifth Avenue below the Public Library at 41st Street.

Your hotel should have free postcards, featuring the hotel, of course. If you walk into the gift shop of the Plaza Hotel, you can buy a postcard of that swanky hotel for 50¢ (to convince people you're staying there, perhaps?).

Postage for an international postcard is 70¢; a letter (up to half an oz.) is 85¢. A two-page letter may cost more.

E-MAIL

Most hotels have dataports in each room or have separate business centers where you can send and retrieve e-mail. You'll have to bring your own cables, so **call your hotel in advance** to find out what the options are. There are also Internet cafes dotted around the city. Try easyInternetCafé, 235 W. 42nd St., between Seventh and Eighth avenues, which is open from 7am to 1am 7 days a week.

SALE SEASONS

Sales are held much more frequently in the United States than in Europe. Because Americans think that a good sale is part

of the American way, retailers look for any occasion to host a blowout or a promotion that will make shoppers think they are saving money. The events can be seasonal, pegged to holidays, or once-a-year events. Yes, there are big January and July sales in New York as in every other city in the world, but there are sales you may have never heard of, such as:

Thanksgiving: The Christmas season officially begins with this American holiday, which is celebrated the fourth Thursday in November. The following day, Friday, is usually the single biggest day in retail for the year. Sometimes stores begin their pre-Christmas sales on this date.

Pre-Christmas Sales: Recently created to goose Christmas shoppers with the warning that the store has less merchandise than usual, prodding you to buy before they sell out.

Post-Christmas Sales: Various stores have their own patterns for post-holiday sales—some stores begin their sales at 8:30am the day after Christmas, while some stores wait until after January 1. It's rare for a store to wait until Epiphany, because it's rare to find an American who knows when (or what) Epiphany is.

Whites Sales: Usually in January, this is a sale of bed linens, rarely white these days since colors and patterns replaced traditional whites in the 1960s.

January Clearance Sales: While most department stores have their end-of-season sales right after Christmas or New Year's, most of the European boutiques in New York have their clearance sales toward the end of January, starting around the 20th. These events, even at stores as exclusive as Hermès, are announced in the *New York Times*.

Valentine's Day Sales: February 14 is Valentine's Day, a big day for lovers to express their feelings with traditional gifts such as flowers, chocolates, or fancy undies. These types of items, along with fragrances, jewelry, and anything with a heart-shaped motif, are promoted heavily.

Presidents' Day Sales: Promotional sales are usually on for this entire holiday weekend in late February. This is a good time to pick up winter clothes and ski equipment.

Memorial Day Sales: Stores hold promotional events for summer merchandise during the long weekend at the end of May.

Fourth of July Sales: Bathing suits and some summer apparel go on sale before the Fourth of July weekend. Fourth of July weekend sees blowout sales events, summer clearance sales, various specials offered for a day or two, and special-event sales. Outlet stores in the New York area often do big sales at this time.

Midsummer Clearance Sales: From late July throughout August, there are major summer sales on European brands. Sales on American brands usually begin right before July 4th weekend.

Back-to-School Sales: During the last 2 weeks in August there are promotional sales for school supplies, furnishings, and clothing.

Columbus Day Sales: Coats and early fall clothing are sold at these sales in early October.

Election Day Sales: These sales in November are a good time to buy coats and fall merchandise that you can still wear.

HOTEL PROMOTIONS

American hotels are far bigger on promotional deals than European hotels, so there may be freebies and extras that you are not used to asking for or getting. Most frequently, these promotions are for weekends, but there are hotels that offer upgrades at check-in, discounted parking, breakfast, or even a free T-shirt. It never hurts to ask.

PRIX-FIXE MEALS & RESTAURANT PROMOTIONS

Almost every famous restaurant in New York has a fixed-price lunch or dinner. The fixed price usually does not include wine and rarely includes tip. There are pre-theater fixed-price meals that offer perhaps the best deals you can find. However, you must eat dinner before 7pm, which many visitors consider uncivilized. Even the most famous restaurants in Manhattan offer these promotions, including The Four Seasons and 21.

During New York's Restaurant Weeks, held twice a year, in late June/early July and February (log on to www.nycvisit.com), the cost of a three-course lunch at all kinds of swanky restaurants equals the year number. So, in 2004, lunch costs $20.04. Some restaurants also offer dinner deals for an additional ten dollars (so they're $30.04 in 2004). With incremental increases of a penny a year, I think you can swing this one for many years to come. Watch the newspaper for advertisements.

TIPPING

When in doubt, give a dollar. The basic tip in America for **small services** (luggage porters and so on) is the $1 bill, although $1 coins are in greater circulation these days, and these will also do the trick. Just learn the size and weight differences between a quarter and a dollar coin so that no one (on either end of the transaction) gets slighted.

It is rare for an American restaurant to automatically add in a service charge or tip unless you are part of a party of eight or more diners. **At meals** tip between 15% and 20% of the total bill *before* the tax was added. **In taxis** give the driver a percentage of the total meter cost, usually 15%. At **beauty salons** and **spas,** tip 15% to 20%.

Please pay attention to the fine print regarding tipping, especially in hotels. It is very common for a hotel to add the tip for room service and to then leave a second blank space

labeled "gratuity" so that those people who are not paying attention will add in another 10% to 15%. Be careful!

BOOZE NEWS

This is a tricky category, so you may want to stay sober enough to take notes. Liquor in Manhattan, especially when sold from fancy liquor stores near the city's finest hotels, is outrageously expensive. Outrageously. I mean, liquor can cost 50% more than it should. Compared to these inflated prices, duty-free liquor is a bargain. But wait! If you can get to a part of America or even Manhattan where real people live (instead of superstars), liquor prices in regular old stores are less than in the duty-free shops.

Now then, should you have the choice of buying a miniature bottle of liquor from your hotel minibar or a small bottle of liquor from an overpriced store, you have to figure out just how much you are going to drink. Miniatures in expensive midtown liquor stores are at least $4 each; a small bottle of Chivas costs about $20.

GADGET LOWDOWN

Many a European visitor has come to the United States and planned his or her free time around electronics shopping, since electronics and small business machines cost about 30% less in the United States than in Europe.

Since there are many pitfalls awaiting you, I have lots of guidance. Electronics are not as easy to buy as you think they will be. Proceed with care. I personally went through hell in order to fulfill an order for a personal computer for my friend Richard. It took approximately 20 hours of my time to research the buy, several transatlantic phone calls back and forth to make sure Richard understood the findings, and then a week of

baited breath while we waited for a computer guru in Nice to figure out if the parts would work. Throughout the research and the agony, I kept screaming at Richard: "No amount of savings is worth going through this!" Think about it.

When I first moved to France, I bought French electronics, but they break down frequently and I have begun to bring over some small American electronic products. Results are 50/50 in terms of satisfaction and success. The most nerve-wracking buy was the digital camera, which, even with an adapter, does not charge up in France. I brought it back to the U.S., planning to take it to J&R, but the camera charged perfectly in an American electrical socket. Go figure.

AMERICAN BRANDS

As a general rule, international brands cost less in the country of origin than they do when exported. Therefore, a trip to the U.S. is the time to stock up on brands like Levi's, Gap, Coach (leather goods), OshKosh, Estée Lauder, Donna Karan, Calvin Klein, and so on.

European shoppers should only consider buying European brands if the items are on sale or are being sold at a factory outlet or discount source.

DUTY CALLS

All airlines have duty-free shopping onboard, and frequently they publish a beautiful color brochure that's in your seat with the other magazines. In many cases, the airline duty-free price is less than the airport duty-free price. The best way to be sure is to look at the brochure (take it along with you) and price what you want on outbound travel. When you leave the United States, price the item in the airport duty-free. Then look it up in your brochure to decide if you want to buy on the plane or not.

Speaking of airport duty-free stores, various terminals at JFK have different shops—some are downright sorry looking while others are more gorgeous than any U.S. mall. Many of them publish a price guide. If you have a lot of time before a flight, you might want to wander.

"Duty-free" stores in Manhattan offer no serious bargains. You'll do better at discount sources.

Chapter Four

EATING & SLEEPING IN NEW YORK

MORE TO EAT THAN APPLES

I've based the restaurant selections in this chapter on my personal needs as a shopper and visitor, with the assumption that good meals and never-to-be-forgotten dining experiences are among the things you are shopping for while you're in New York. The restaurant information below is also created to help you get a great meal at a great price.

There are more dining suggestions in chapters 5, 6, and 7, which are related to specific New York neighborhoods.

Big Chef Arrivals

Part of the New York experience involves eating your way to the, uh, core of the city. And part of New York's revival after the September 11 attacks has been the arrival of more and more famous chefs . . . some from Europe, others from different cities across the U.S.—the most heralded being **Thomas Keller** from The French Laundry in the Napa area in California, who will open a restaurant at the Time Warner Center in Columbus Circle (which should actually be open by the time you read this); and **Charlie Trotter,** from Chicago, who will also open a restaurant in the Time Warner Center (which, again, should be open by the time you lay eyes on this).

DEALS, DEALS, DEALS

Hotel Dining Deals

One of the most important lessons I have learned as a traveler is that hotels are always looking for lunch business in their dining rooms, even when their dining rooms are famous, as many of them are in New York. As a result, you can often get some of the best lunch deals around at the top hotels in town. Several of the city's snazziest hotels, and I'm talking places like **The Pierre** and **The Mark** here, have fixed-price luncheon menus that allow you to enjoy three courses for a flat price that varies from about $20 to $25 per person. You would pay that same amount for lunch and get less food, less service, less atmosphere, and less quality at many other places in town.

Big Chef Dining Deals

I was recently taken to **Café Boulud,** one of Daniel Boulud's restaurants, and was shocked to see a three-course menu for $20.04, a special because of New York's Restaurant Week, held twice each year (check out www.nycvisit.com to find out about Restaurant Week, p. 44). Granted, after iced tea, wine, and tip, the total comes to more than $20.04 per person, but this is still an extraordinary value. There are all sorts of dining deals like this; some are offered in slow seasons, others are offered all year, and still others are only available during promotional periods. Ask around and check the website above to find out what dining deals are on during your stay in New York.

In an effort to bring more business downtown after the September 11 attacks, many downtown restaurants are taking part in a promotion called **Downtown for Dinner** (✆ **212/835-2789;** www.downtownny.com). The two dozen different restaurants that are part of this promotion offer three-course prix-fixe dinners for around $20, and most even include tax, beverage, and tips in this price. Reserve directly with the participating restaurants.

Big Chef Cafe Deals

Following a trend that started in Europe, many big-name, big-time, big-price chefs have opened smaller cafes or bistros that offer great food at affordable prices. These places do not attempt to be cheapie versions of the chef's most famous venues. Instead, the cafes serve creative cuisine without causing you to mortgage your house to afford a meal. This is a real New York experience.

Note also that many of these big name chefs also go into business with lesser-known chefs to open restaurants, so keep your ears open.

The listings in the following section are by chef.

Daniel Boulud

Café Boulud

The Surrey Hotel, 20 E. 76th St., between Fifth and Madison aves. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

This is not the most low-key of Boulud's eateries, but it's still less expensive than the star chef's fanciest restaurant. Café Boulud is located in a fabulous shopping neighborhood and is right around the corner from my beloved Mark Hotel. The restaurant often has various promotional deals. **✆ 212/772-2600.**

DB Bistro Moderne

City Club Hotel, 55 W. 44th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves. (Subway: B, D, V, or F to 42nd St./5th Ave.).

This is the least fancy of the Boulud properties. A casual spot in the Theater District, DB Bistro is the home of the famous DB burger—stuffed with foie gras or truffles and sold for the whopper price of about $35 each (and up) . . . but something to tell the folks back home about. To be honest, my burger sort of crumbled in my hands and was more of a concept than a heavenly meal. There are a lot of offices around here, so take-out lunches are available. **✆ 212/391-2400.**

Alain Ducasse

Mix

68 W. 58th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves. (Subway: R, W, or Q to 57th St.).

This is the New York version of Ducasse's famous Spoon restaurants, which dot the tony hotspots of the world. However, this edition has an easy-to-use mix-and-match menu because it takes more than a New York Minute to use the traditional Spoon menus. Mix simplifies everything for you, giving you the exciting chance to mix and match any of the items on the menu to create your own prix-fixe meal.

The price of your meal is based on how many courses you order and what time of day you eat. Lunch and pre-theater dinner are $36 for two courses or $45 for three courses; after 6:30pm, dinner is $48 for one course, $58 for two, and $72 for three.

The food is yummy, sort of fusion-world-comfort food. Some of the meals come in their casserole pots; and the mac and cheese is nothing like what mom used to make. I had a lobster dish I may never get over.

The location, at Sixth Avenue, is easy to get to. The decor is swanky and the crowd is extremely hip—mostly young, casual, and rich. My meal was fabulous, although the service was perfunctory; the couple next to us at dinner got fabulous service, including a sprinkling of sugared almonds across their table when coffee was served. Ooh la la! **✆ 212/583-0300.**

Jean-Georges Vongerichten

Spice Market

403 W. 13th St., at Ninth Ave. (Subway: A, C, E, or L to 14th St, at 8th Ave.).

This restaurant, which Vongerichten created with chef Gray Kunz, is similar to Market, Vongerichten's restaurant in Paris. The food is great—an even broader version of Vong's cuisine (see below). The crowd is trendy beyond belief.

VONG
200 E. 54th St., between Third and Second aves. (Subway: E, V, or 6 to Lexington Ave./51st St.).

This is one of Jean-Georges's first restaurants, serving French-influenced Thai cuisine. It's a great choice for a somewhat spicy meal in an exotic atmosphere. And though it's very popular at lunch, you should come here for the food rather than the people-watching. ✆ **212/486-9592.**

PRE-THEATER DEALS

Broadway curtains usually rise at 8pm, and most restaurants in midtown offer pre-theater dinner specials that allow you to get a fabulous meal at a fabulous price—if you eat early enough. You don't have to show your theater tickets at the door to prove that you're going to the theater, you just have to come to terms with eating dinner at 6pm. A three-course pre-theater dinner at a good restaurant usually comes in at around $32 to $35 per person, which is considerably less than it would cost if eaten a la carte after 8pm.

Legends & Landmarks of Dining

Some cities offer dining experiences so sublime that I consider them "legends and landmarks." Just once in your life, you'll probably want to try the following restaurants—you don't go to these just for the food but for the whole gestalt.

IL VAGABONDO
351 E. 62nd St., between Second and First aves. (Subway: F to Lexington Ave./63rd St.).

Perhaps this is only a legend and a landmark to those of us who came of age in Manhattan in the '60s. Il Vagabondo is the funky, dumpy, Italian home-style restaurant of your dreams, with more atmosphere than you can imagine: There's even a bocce court right in the center of the dining space. This place is on the low end of the price range. ✆ **212/832-9221.**

Rainbow Room
30 Rockefeller Plaza, between 49th and 50th sts., 65th floor (Subway: B, D, F, or V to Rockefeller Center).

Here's the answer to your burning question: Yes, the Rainbow Room is open to civilians, with a few restrictions. You can eat in the Rainbow Room Grill—dinner and cocktails—every day of the week. The Rainbow Room Ballroom is open for dinner and dancing on Friday and Saturday nights only. There is also a grand brunch buffet in the Ballroom on Sunday. **✆ 212/632-5100.**

Tavern on the Green
Central Park W., at 67th St. (Subway: A, B, C, D, E, 1, or 9 to Columbus Circle, or 1 or 9 to 66th St./Lincoln Center).

Despite the fact that tourists flock here, the beauty of Tavern on the Green (first built in 1870 for sheep, believe it or not) is that it's still frequented by celebs and beautiful people. The food is surprisingly good and the prices offer real value. Plus, there's often free dancing in the garden, with little golden lights twinkling in the trees. There's a pre-theater fixed-price three-course meal for $25. They also do lunch all week and brunch on Sunday. **✆ 212/873-3200.**

In-Store Dining

All of the major department stores have a place for you to eat, and some of them actually have several places to eat, offering a variety of dining experiences. Such is modern retail.

Cafes have become really important to smaller shops; you'll find one or two in the basement or on the mezzanine of just about every name brand in New York, from **Old Navy** to **DKNY** to **Armani** to **Frederic Fekkai** to the **NBA Store.** Most of these cafes have a gimmick: There are bagels and health food snacks at DKNY, a '50s-style diner at Old Navy, and so on. **ABC Carpet** now has **Le Pain Quotidien,** a Belgian chain known for the quality of its bread (say Kwo-ti-dee-*en*); **Burberry** has—of course—a tearoom. Some stores have gone the extra step and now offer

fine dining: the **Nicole Farhi** shop on East 60th Street is noisy and fun, and serves really nice Continental food (including great breads).

BARNEY'S

660 Madison Ave., at 61st St. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave., at 59th St.).

Fred's, the stylish cafe in the basement level of Barney's uptown store, has a sort of moderne Milan feel. This is very much the place to be seen having a nosh. In fact, I'm not a big fan because it's simply too too, my dear. But you should do it at least once in your life. Without the kids, please. ✆ **212/833-2200.**

BERGDORF-GOODMAN

754 Fifth Ave., at 58th St. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave., at 59th St.).

The Café on 5 is on, duh, the fifth floor; there's a newer cafe in the basement in the new beauty portion of the store. I sometimes go across the street to Bergdorf Man to eat at Café 745, a tiny cafe with great salads and no tourists. ✆ **212/753-7300.**

BLOOMINGDALE'S

1000 Third Ave., at 59th St. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave., at 59th St.).

Three choices for three different styles: Le Train Bleu (a sit-down restaurant that resembles the inside of the famous French train from the Belle Epoque); 40 Carrots (health food); and Showtime Café (a cafeteria).

HENRI BENDEL

712 Fifth Ave., at 56th St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave., at 51st St.).

The tearoom on the first floor of Henri Bendel serves light lunches and teas. The view is of Fifth Avenue through Lalique windows. Teapots line the walls, and the tables have a shelf above your

lap for your handbag. The food is adequate and midpriced (entrees are around $15), and the salads are especially nice.

Macy's
Herald Sq., 151 W. 34th St., between Broadway and Seventh Ave. (Subway: B, D, F, N, Q, R, V, or W to 34th St./Herald Sq.).

There are dining choices on every floor, offering a variety of ethnic eats, old faves, and even a Starbucks. The Marketplace in the basement level (called The Cellar) is like the Harrods food halls in London, while Cucina Express is a relatively classy and healthy fast-food option.

Saks
611 Fifth Ave., at 50th St. (Subway: B, D, F, or V to Rockefeller Center).

Cafe SFA is one of my favorite places for lunch in New York. It's elegant without being stuffy, serves a great raisin-and-walnut bread that costs a fortune in stores, offers a good choice of light fare for those who only want a salad or such, and boasts moderate prices. Watch for special promotions—I went once when they had the pastry chef from The Ritz in Paris and were doing a French teatime—*très bon!*

Snack & Shop

When I am having an intense shopping day, I do not want a 2-hour lunch, nor do I want to spend what is the equivalent of a pair of shoes for my lunch. I want quick, I want cheap, I want convenient, and I want good (though charm and chic are nice bonuses).

Burger Heaven
9 E. 53rd St., near Fifth Ave. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave., at 51st St.); 804 Lexington Ave., at 62nd St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.); 291 Madison Ave., between 40th and 41st sts. (Subway: S, 4, 5, 6, or 7

to Grand Central Station); 536 Madison Ave., between 54th and 55th sts. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave., at 51st St.); 20 E. 49th St., between Fifth and Madison aves. (Subway: B, D, F, or V to Rockefeller Center).

Not only is this my regular haunt, but I dream of the Roquefort burger. I have brought many visitors to New York here, including travelers from abroad. While there is an entire menu with a variety of choices, I began here about 25 years ago with the pizza burger and moved over to the Roquefort burger about 15 years ago.

There are a handful of locations, but my regular is right off Fifth Avenue on East 53rd Street, a great shopping location.

Burke & Burke

485 Madison Ave., at 52nd St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave., at 51st St.); 156 W. 56th St., between Sixth and Seventh aves. (Subway: A, B, C, D, E, 1, or 9 to Columbus Circle); 416 W. 13th St., near Ninth Ave. (Subway: A, C, or E to 14th St.).

Another chain dotted all over Manhattan, Burke & Burke is a gourmet sandwich shop. They deliver, so you can actually order in to your hotel. Few of the shops have table service; this is gourmet takeout. Again, there is a large selection, but I fall for the same old sandwich time after time. Make mine the turkey and brie on a baguette with honey mustard. When you pass a Burke & Burke during your wanderings, get their menu because it lists all of their addresses so you'll be prepared wherever you may be.

Ollie's Noodle Shop

2315 Broadway, at 84th St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 86th St.); Times Sq., 190 W. 44th St., near Seventh Ave., (Subway: S, N, R, Q, W, 1, 2, 3, 7, or 9 to Times Sq.); 1991 Broadway, between 67th and 68th sts. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 66th St./ Lincoln Center, or 1, 2, 3, or 9 to 72nd St.).

This is a low-priced noodle shop that actually has a full Chinese menu as well as dim sum and then some. I like the one on Broadway and 84th Street for a break while shopping in that area, but the business has grown and opened up all over town, even in the Theater District, and makes an attractive pre- or post-theater possibility.

Teatime

Although tea is a British tradition, it's especially welcome in New York, where you can easily get exhausted by a hard day on your feet. Tea is also a great option when you are going out to the theater and not having dinner until 11pm—it will curb your appetite before the play without making you full. There are only a few specialty teahouses in New York, but all the major hotels do a big business in tea.

For this section, I tested some of the big, Fifth Avenue hotel names that are generally associated with afternoon tea, and was quite disappointed with some of the most famous ones. So if I don't mention your favorite, it might be that I wasn't wild about it.

Barclay Intercontinental

111 E. 48th St., at Lexington Ave. (Subway: S, 4, 5, 6, or 7 to Grand Central).

This is one of my regular spots for tea. It's located in a very convenient place, especially if you are meeting someone who is coming in through Grand Central Station. The style is traditional English.

Burberry

9 E. 57th St., between Fifth and Madison aves. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave., at 57th St.).

Since everything else about Burberry is new and cutting edge, why shouldn't they also serve tea?

FELISSIMO
10 W. 56th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave., at 51st St.).

In this sensational store (browse before plopping down in the upstairs tearoom), you'll find Japanese tea service as well as herbal teas, old-fashioned teas, French infusions, and much more.

THE PIERRE
Fifth Ave., at 61st St. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave., at 59th St.).

Rotunda Tea is what they call it. I've never seen anything like this in my life—I came for tea and wanted to stay for retirement. And I don't mean bedtime. The Rotunda is a small and intimate space, with beautiful painted murals and drop-dead decor, located in the middle of the Pierre Hotel. A pot of tea is a mere $5! You can also get snacks or a light bite.

SoHo So Great

You'll have no problem getting something to eat in SoHo: There are grocers, kiosks, fast-food joints, takeout places, and cutting-edge chic restaurants. I have two regulars that I visit depending on my ability to get a reservation.

BALTHAZAR
80 Spring St., between Broadway and Lafayette sts. (Subway: J, M, Z, N, Q, W, or R to Canal St.).

Just half a block over from Broadway, and right near the most commercial area of SoHo shopping, Balthazar is the "in" spot of the minute, a Parisian-style bistro with a great crowd and affordable prices. The food is old-fashioned French traditional bistro style—naturally, you can get a good steak and fries here.

Not only do they have a takeout department and a bread shop, but at the end of the evening, they put out all the unsold bread so you can take it home with you (free) since it won't

be used the next day. Make note, Marie Antoinette: You'll never be hungry again! Reservations can be hard to get, although lunch is much easier to do than dinner. You can also go for morning café au lait. ✆ **212/965-1785.**

BAROLO
398 W. Broadway, at Spring St. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.).

Before Balthazar, this was my regular place. Barolo is great for pasta, and there's a garden for alfresco dining. I do it for a late lunch—I can beat the crowds and can usually escape calling ahead if I come at 1:30pm. ✆ **212/226-1102.**

SLEEPING IN NEW YORK

There seem to be two completely different schools of thought when it comes to booking hotels. Some people say, "Hey, I'm only sleeping there," and want the least expensive room they can get in a safe neighborhood. Not me. I usually want my hotel to be part of my whole travel experience. I travel to make my life something it isn't when I'm at home, so I want service and location and pretty flowers and sheets made of very crisp, real linen.

Since the kinds of hotels I like are generally very expensive, I am constantly looking for deals—or at least little extras that make luxury a smart choice. I've spent less space on the totally glam hotels and more on the specialty hotels. Prices at most of these places are about $200 to $250 per night at promotional rates and $250 to $300 in season—pretty good deals for big cities these days. Rack rates (the published rates) tend to run higher, of course, but there's no reason for anyone to pay those rates. The hotels that I have chosen for this chapter are all in locations that are convenient for shoppers.

Various websites offer hotel deals, including places like hotels.com. If you do use a website, check to see what kind of flexibility you have and if there is a booking fee.

Parking Concepts

If you have a car with you, pick your hotel with parking needs in mind. I don't want to sound discouraging, but some hotels charge up to $50 a day for parking! This is unusually high, but the norm is about $25 per day. And a day is not a 24-hour period; it's a calendar day, so you can get stuck for 2 days within one 24-hour period.

I often pick my hotels based on whether they have a low-priced parking package or offer free parking. Wouldn't you rather spend $50 on a new pair of shoes? One of the reasons I have been devoted to The Warwick (see below) is that when you stay at the hotel, the lot next door charges only $18 for overnight parking.

New York Hotel Deals

You may want to keep in mind a few standing promotions for which you might qualify:

Convention Rates Professionals visiting New York for a convention should be aware of special rates offered by certain hotels that cater to conventions or to visitors coming for market weeks. Even Garment Center buyers coming to work the market qualify.

Corporate Rates Most hotels offer corporate discounts, often a 20% discount off rack rates. Since the rack rate can be outrageously high, though, this still may not be the best rate the hotel has. Ask and compare. At some chains you can fill out a form to become a corporate member. Leading Hotels of the World (www.lhw.com) has such a policy and offers a fine corporate price break in all of their hotels.

New Hotel Rates When a new luxury hotel opens, there are often get-acquainted deals.

Weekend Rates Because there are so many businesspeople visiting the Big Apple during the week, hotel prices are steep—and climbing every year. However, when those guys go home,

weekend rates make a city stay attractively affordable. The rates vary with the time of year and with availability, but so do the choices.

Weekend visitors should check the Sunday Travel section of the *New York Times* for various weekend rates and special promotions—note that some are per room and some are per person. Don't be misled by the big fonts; read the fine print. Also ask which days are considered weekend days, since some hotels include Sunday as part of the weekend while others do not. Usually a weekend is only Friday and Saturday nights.

The **Waldorf-Astoria** (301 Park Ave., between 49th and 50th sts.; ✆ **212/355-3000**) often offers weekend rates at under $200 per night. The **Rihga Royal Hotel** (151 W. 54th St., between Sixth and Seventh aves.; ✆ **212/307-5000**), a terrific all-suite hotel, has weekend rates starting at $229. These two hotels are very different, as are their locations—you really need to do some thinking and chatting with reservationists before you pounce on a deal. But you should know that there are some truly splendid rooms out there for a decent price.

Theater Packages Many hotels, especially the ones in the Times Square area (also known as the Theater District), offer packages that include theater tickets. These packages can either mean that the hotel's concierge will get theater tickets for you, which you will then pay for, or that the price of the tickets is included in the package. Make sure this is all clear when you book.

Seasonal Discounts

Room rates can vary dramatically—by hundreds of dollars in some cases—depending on what time of year you visit. Winter, from January through March, is best for bargains, with summer (especially July and Aug) second best. Fall is the busiest and most expensive season after Christmas, but November tends to be quiet and rather affordable, as long as you're not booking a parade-route hotel on Thanksgiving weekend. All bets are off at Christmastime—expect to pay top dollar for everything.

Hotel Tax Alert

While New York's occupancy tax has been lowered, it's still high—13.25%, and can add a shocking amount to your total bill. If price is a consideration, you might want to ask a few questions before you book, such as what the total rate will be including city tax, hotel tax, and any other extras that might not be included. If you are staying for 5 days or more, the tax can be quite hefty—you often pay the room rate of a sixth night in taxes. Don't be shocked when you check out; be prepared before you check in.

Consolidators & Discounters

If you crave the deluxe hotels that I do but aren't quite ready to pay top dollar, give a call to a few consolidators and see if they have bought a block of rooms in a hotel to be sold at a discounted price. This strategy usually doesn't work during heavily booked convention times, but it's always worth a try. ***Please note:*** Sometimes a consolidator will get you a room . . . but at no discount! Check the hotel's prices before calling the consolidator and beware! Try **Hotel Discounts** (✆ **800/964-6835;** www.180096hotel.com) or **Cheap Trips Online** (✆ **800/444-7666;** www.accommodationsxpress.com).

Online Savings

Every traveler has a few favorite websites for bargains. My suggestions: hotels.com and priceline.com. Know that the price of the same room can vary with the site. You may also want to play against the middle; after you obtain a few quotes from online services, call the desk at the hotel and see what they can offer after hearing the online rates and offers. Admit to being confused, and ask for the best deal, with extra amenities (upgrades, breakfasts, and so on).

Best Buys

Hoteliers have recently begun to try out a new concept in Manhattan—a good product at a less expensive price. This usually means under $200 per night. The compromise is usually on the size of the room and the decor. Among the more interesting new choices are **The Time** (224 W. 49th St.; ✆ **877/NYC-TIME**), **W Hotels** (see below), and **Ian Schrager Hotels (ISH),** which range from The Paramount to the Henry Hudson (see below), where rooms can be less than $100 per night.

Luxury Shopping Hotels

Luxury hotels are New York's middle name; if you are coming to New York to be part of the scene, then you'll want to stay in one, if only for a night or two. And wear your Manolos, at least when you tromp across the lobby. I was having tea in the lobby of the Four Seasons recently and in 20 minutes I saw (live! in person!) Oprah Winfrey, Jeff Goldblum, and Donald Sutherland. The fancier the hotel, the more chance you'll have of getting in a little quality stargazing between arrival and departure. Between **The St. Regis** (✆ **212/753-4500**), **The Peninsula New York** (✆ **212/956-2888**), **The Sherry-Netherland** (✆ **800/247-4377**), and the hotels listed below, you can have all the luxury you crave and still be a few feet from a fine shopping district. Many luxury hotels are Leading Hotels of the World and can be booked by calling ✆ **800/223-6800.**

Four Seasons Hotel New York

57 E. 57th St., between Madison and Park aves. (Subway: N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

This is perhaps my favorite location when money is no object. The hotel is more expensive than most other luxury properties, but it also has a cachet that money can't buy . . . and a fabulous restaurant. This place is essentially new, so it's modern, luxe, and boasts every new technology. The rooms are big and the bathrooms are huge. There's always a separate dressing room alongside the bathroom.

A room will cost at least $600 per night. The Business Center charges $1 per minute for e-mail and then charged me an additional $40 to print out 20 pages—if you are on a budget, the Four Seasons might not be for you. On the other hand, you are half a block from a great bookstore (Borders) and a great discount store (Daffy's) so you need not look in the Chanel-Dior direction. Toll-free reservations in the U.S. ✆ **800/223-6800.** Local phone ✆ 212/758-5700. www.fourseasons.com.

MANDARIN ORIENTAL

Time Warner Center, 1 Columbus Circle. (Subway: A, B, C, D, E, 1, or 9 to Columbus Circle).

There is no more "in" place to be staying in Manhattan, because everyone in New York flocks to the latest and greatest—to be able to compare and brag. Although Mandarin Oriental also manages The Mark on Manhattan's East Side, this is the new flagship, bringing spa and services to New York that have become famous in Asia and in London.

Rooms are located in two towers on the 34th to the 54th floors. The hotel offers views, fine dining, and access to the mall downstairs, which boasts famous eats and stores. You can possibly luck into introductory rates or even a package, although the presidential suite goes for over $10,000 a night and a suite costs $1,500. For toll-free reservations, ✆ **800/282-8383.** Local phone ✆ 212/207-8880. www.mandarinoriental.com.

THE MARK

25 E. 77th St., between Fifth and Madison aves. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

I'm loyal to The Mark for several reasons: The location is great for shopping, the location is good for getting to and from New York area airports without having to drive through midtown traffic, and you can get a room with a kitchen—which works for me because I often load up on groceries and cooking supplies when I'm in Manhattan.

Of course, this place is also luxury personified—there's a well-being center in the hotel and The Mark is affiliated with a spa across the street, plus there's a direct phone line to Zitomer's department store. Rooms are all decorated in grand style—like they jumped off the pages of *Architectural Digest*. The cost? A room can be yours for under $400 a night on a promotional deal. Toll-free reservations in the U.S. ✆ **800/526-6566.** Local phone ✆ 212/744-4300. www.mandarinoriental.com.

The Pierre

2 E. 61st St., between Fifth and Madison aves. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave., at 59th St.).

If you think all luxury hotels are created equal and it doesn't matter which one you pick, meet The Pierre. While it's a pricey choice (about $550 per night), it happens to be the least expensive of the drop-dead fancy hotels in Manhattan. It's also the only one with elevator operators. They wear white gloves, of course.

The decor is old-fashioned and elegant, and the rooms vary enormously. The bathrooms are usually good, but they are not in the same league as the ones at some of the newfangled hotels (although bathroom amenities are by Bulgari). The hotel has a residential feel to it (you can buy an apartment here), so it's more like a private club than a hotel . . . and that's what you are paying for.

The bad news: The Business Center charged me $2 per minute for e-mail. The good news: I bought so much that I couldn't cram it into my luggage, so I shipped a box home to Texas (where I used to live) through the concierge by way of UPS. Total charge: a mere $15. Because this hotel is managed by Four Seasons, they have lemon soufflé pancakes for breakfast, which, to me, is reason enough to visit. For U.S. reservations, ✆ **800/223-6800.** Local phone ✆ 212/838-8000. www.fourseasons.com.

Four-Star Shopping Hotels

I've never found a four-star hotel in New York that compares to the city's offering of luxury five-star hotels. And I'm not just talking about fancy rooms or better bars of soap: A five-star luxury hotel functions in a seamless manner that a four-star hotel simply can't quite get down pat. It may not seriously offend you and the price difference may be worth the inconvenience, but never make the mistake of considering a four-star property as close cousin to a five-star property. Four-star properties are for those who don't mind the difference and like saving the cash.

THE BENJAMIN

125 E. 50th St., near Lexington Ave. (Subway: 6, E, or V to Lexington Ave. and 51st St.).

This is another Manhattan East Suites property; it used to be The Beverly Hotel, which was one of my secret finds in New York. Now it's been redone, renamed, and repositioned. Rates are between $229 and $299 depending on what kind of promotional deal you can get; sometimes continental breakfast is included. I got a super promotional offer in the mail through American Express for a one-bedroom suite at $249. For reservations, ✆ **888/4-BENJAMIN.** Local phone ✆ 212/320-8002. Fax 212/715-2525. www.thebenjamin.com or look online at the website for the hotel's holding company, at www.affinia.com, which owns many other hotels in town, including The Surrey (listed later in this chapter).

THE DRAKE SWISSÔTEL

440 Park Ave., at 56th St. (Subway: 6, E, or V to Lexington Ave. and 51st St.).

The Drake's fine reputation has been built on its reasonable prices and great location. This place is considered a secret find by many Ladies Who Lunch, as well as by businesspeople who use the hotel during the week. Both sets know that this

was once a residential hotel, so it has an intimate and plush feeling and boasts rooms that aren't cubicles. The newly renovated rooms and suites are decorated in faux Biedermeier, which is a novel idea. The hotel also has a new spa and the first U.S. branch of French pastry maker Fauchon. There's a bed-and-breakfast package with rates of $265 for two people in a deluxe room or $245 for two people in a standard room. Standard and deluxe rooms are more or less the same size. For reservations, ✆ **800/DRAKE-NY.** Local phone ✆ 212/421-0900. Fax 212/688-8053.

The Lombardy Hotel

111 E. 56th St., near Park Ave. (Subway: 6, E, or V to Lexington Ave. and 51st St.).

Aunt Lynn turned me on to this hotel when she came to New York to go to the theater. It's a small but old-fashioned grand hotel with a perfect location on East 56th Street. Prices are pretty fantastic when the hotel is offering their half-price promotions. Rack rate is about $300 a night, but you can usually do much better: Aunt Lynn found a promotional deal for $199 per night. I was quoted $225 plus tax as the price of the least expensive standard room. Their booking office is Sterling Hotels & Resorts, ✆ **800/637-7200.** Local phone ✆ 212/753-8600. Fax 212/754-5683.

Mayflower Hotel

15 Central Park W. (Subway: A, B, C, D, E, 1, or 9 to Columbus Circle).

Okay, so it's not the Trump or the new Time Warner Center, but it is next door to them and near all the Columbus Circle food and shopping action. What I'm trying to say very politely is that this is not a fancy hotel. There's nothing wrong with it, but it's not as fancy as many of my other listings. However, you can get a rate of $169 for a deluxe room and $219 for a suite. And this area is *the* new hot location in Manhattan, since you'll be next door to the Time Warner Center. For reservations,

✆ **800/223-4164.** Local phone ✆ 212/269-6060. www.mayflowerhotel.com.

The Surrey Hotel

20 E. 76th St., between Madison and Fifth aves. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

I found this hotel by accident while I was shopping on Madison Avenue; you certainly can't beat the location or the fact that Café Boulud is in the lobby. This was once an apartment building and is now part of the Manhattan East Suite group. The lobby is simple but swank. The rooms may remind you of furnished apartments—the basics are there and they're fine, but the decor is nothing special. You can get daily rates or monthly rates as well as special weekend and promotional rates. A studio begins at $250 for one and goes up to $290 for two. For reservations, ✆ **800/ME-SUITE.** Local phone ✆ 212/288-3700. Fax 212/628-1549.

The Warwick

65 W. 54th St., near Sixth Ave. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave., at 51st St.).

This is the kind of find that every smart shopper wants to know about, mostly because the price is about half that of a five-star hotel and the rooms are large. If price and location are of paramount importance, you'll be thrilled with this choice.

The Warwick is an old, very famous New York hotel that went downhill for a while and therefore may have fallen off your list. However, the place has been completely refurbished. Know that it has a tiny lobby, but *grrrreat* rooms with rates around $250 per night. For reservations, ✆ **800/203-3232.** Local phone 212/247-2700. www.warwickhotels.com.

Unusual Locations (Great for Shopping)

60 Thompson

60 Thompson St., between Broome and Spring sts. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.).

This is a small luxury hotel in such an incredibly fabulous Village-SoHo shopping area that you may never leave downtown. ✆ **877/431-0400.** Fax 877/431-0200. www.60thompson.com.

SoHo Grand Hotel

310 W. Broadway, between Grand and Canal sts. (Subway: A, C, or E to Canal St.).

Located conveniently on the edge of SoHo, the SoHo Grand is swank and moderne—keeping with the cutting-edge nature of this neighborhood. Rooms are stark, small, and very chic; rates begin at $150 per night. ✆ **800/965-3000.** www.sohogrand.com.

Chains for Deals

Apple Core Hotels

This is a group of three hotels, in the three- to four-star category, that are in great Manhattan locations and that keep prices below $200 per night—some are even $150 a night.

They include **Quality Hotel and Suites Rockefeller Center,** at 46th Street, near Avenue of the Americas (✆ **800/567-7720**); **Best Western Manhattan,** at 32nd Street, off of Fifth Avenue (✆ **800/551-2303**); and **Quality Hotel East Side,** at 30th Street and Lexington Avenue (✆ **212/736-1600**). Rooms have the usual luxuries we expect (including voice mail and even dataports) and are nice but not extravagantly decorated.

Doubletree Guest Suites

1568 Broadway, at 47th St. (Subway: N, R, or W to 49th St.).

All the rooms are suites, the location is right in the thick of Times Square and the Theater District, and the prices begin at $200. There are packages for theater visits, for weekends, and so on. For reservations, ✆ **800/222-TREE.** Local phone ✆ 212/719-1600. www.doubletreehotels.com.

SHERATON NEW YORK HOTEL AND TOWERS

811 Seventh Ave., at 52nd St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 50th St.).

It might not be romantic, but Sheraton has decided to affiliate many of their hotels with shopping, and have various shopping promotions, some in conjunction with a bank or credit card. You may get coupons for discounts in stores or a gift upon check-in; rates on weekend deals begin at $79, which is per room, not per person! To get the promotional rates, you have to ask for them and sometimes need to have a promotional code. Ask.

Note: Sheraton also manages a small hotel called the Sheraton Russell, which is at 45 Park Ave., at 37th Street—it's a secret hotel find used especially by garment and fashion people because of its location and moderate rates. For reservations, ✆ **877/782-0018.** Local phone for Sheraton ✆ 212/685-7676. Local phone for Sheraton Russell ✆ 212/581-1000. www.sheraton.com.

W HOTELS

W New York: 541 Lexington Ave., at 49th St. (Subway: 6, E, or V to Lexington Ave./51st St.); W New York—The Court: 130 E. 39th St., at Lexington Ave. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, 7, or S to Grand Central); W New York—The Tuscany: 120 E. 39th St., between Park and Lexington aves. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, 7, or S to Grand Central); W New York—Times Square: 1567 Broadway, at 47th St. (Subway: 1, 2, 3, 9, N, R, W, or Q to Times Sq.); W New York—Union Square: 201 Park Ave. S., at 17th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, Q, R, or W to 14th St.).

W is a concept hotel—modern, minimal, and high chic at low prices. They have taken over several older Manhattan hotels, redone them, and created a whole new hotel picture with very realistic prices, often under $200 a night if you get a promotional deal. When I booked in, it was $269 per night, but that was a weeknight. Since they keep taking more and more

properties, you need to call and get the lowdown on which property has the best location for you and the best deal. I admit to not being wildly impressed by their Lexington Avenue hotel, but I'm extremely impressed by the W Tuscany. Call ahead for the latest deals at ✆ **877/W-HOTELS** or visit www.starwood.com/whotels.

Chapter Five

UPTOWN SHOPPING NEIGHBORHOODS: WEST

DIRECTIONALLY SPEAKING

There is no other city in the world that I know of where the parts of town depend on where you're standing. There is no center of town called "downtown" in New York. Downtown is down from where you are standing, unless you are in the river below the bottom of the island, and then it's all uptown.

Since this is all so arbitrary, I create a few random map boundaries in these pages. This is especially important to do now that downtown Manhattan has become so vital to the new shopping scene. Therefore, I decree 34th Street the divider between uptown and downtown. (For the downtown chapter of this book, see p. 123.) Fifth Avenue has always been the divider between east and west. In this edition, uptown neighborhoods for the East Side and West Side are in two different chapters, followed by a chapter about downtown.

The extensive listings in these three chapters are here because I believe that sometimes the best way to shop is to head for a general destination and let your feet do the wandering. I have included some lunch possibilities here, although there is another section on restaurants in chapter 4.

WEST 34TH STREET

The West 34th Street neighborhood is actually a zigzag stretching from Penn Station (between Seventh and Eighth aves.) to Fifth Avenue by way of a lot of shopping real estate—much of it new and improved. The addition of **Kmart,** right near Penn Station, has extended the shopping district and given everyone a place for one-stop shopping. But the real energy comes from **Old Navy,** across the street from Macy's, and a branch of **H&M,** also across from Macy's. There is also a branch of **Daffy's** (one of New York's most famous off-pricers—although this is not my favorite branch), **Gap,** and a big **Banana Republic. Victoria's Secret** is on the corner of 34th Street. **Conway**—another off-pricer—has several stores dotted around here. Conway is down-market, but I have fun there. You may not.

Remember that just because a lot of this area has been revitalized, it's still not Fifth Avenue. In fact, this area is far from chic. It's practical. To get the most out of this area, you really have to consider the Garment District, **Lord & Taylor** (Fifth Ave., at 38th St.), and the row of stores south of Lord & Taylor on Fifth (until about 34th St.), as part of the neighborhood.

There are a few street vendors and stalls around here—many sell fake designer perfumes or big-name perfumes bought in the Caribbean. Let the buyer beware. Postcards in this part of town go 10 for $1—a good buy.

EATS: The department stores each have several choices for lunch—if you decide to dine in one of them, go before or after the usual lunch hour to avoid crowds. There's also a 1950s-style diner downstairs in the Old Navy store.

TRANSPORTATION: You can take the A, C, E, 1, 2, 3, or 9 train to 34th Street/Penn Station, or the B, D, F, V, Q, W, R, or N to 34th Street/Herald Square.

KMART

1 Penn Plaza, 34th St., at Seventh Ave.

Maybe Kmart isn't your idea of a find, but if you live in New York, this discount drugstore-and-more is a godsend. I'll just list the store's hours so that you know you can shop when most other stores are closed: Monday through Friday 8am to 9pm, Saturday 10am to 9pm, and Sunday 11am to 8pm. The pharmacy is closed on Sunday.

OLD NAVY

150 W. 34th St., between Broadway and Seventh Ave.

This is the Old Navy flagship in Manhattan, and all I can say is "wow." The store is huge, with tons of energy, displays, and doodads that make it almost a science museum. There's a Joe's Diner in the basement, but I was not impressed with my meal there. This is retail-entertainment at its finest. See p. 192 for more about the Old Navy brand.

THE GARMENT DISTRICT

The Garment District is the name of a neighborhood on the west side of Manhattan where most, but not all, of the needle trades have their showrooms, offices, and sometimes, cutting rooms. Although the different kinds of garments are clustered in different parts of the Garment District, the main area, where you'll see the racks whizzing by with their dozens of brand-new fashions, is on Seventh Avenue around 40th Street. Incidentally, Seventh Avenue in the Garment District was officially renamed Fashion Avenue in 1972 and signs to that effect have been duly posted, but I don't know anyone who calls this Fashion Avenue. Broadway bisects Sixth Avenue at 34th Street, so this part of Broadway, which is very close to Seventh Avenue, also houses much of the trade. Many buildings have two different entrances (and sometimes two different addresses): one on Broadway and one on Seventh Avenue.

Sample-Sale Venue

Parsons School of Design is in this neighborhood, at 560 Seventh Ave. (at 40th St.), and there are frequent sample sales and shopping events in the school's auditorium. Call ✆ **212/229-8959** for further information.

The best thing about the Garment District is that it is different things to different people: Some salivate, others shudder. For the person who has fabric in the blood, the Garment District is one of the most exciting places on earth—the hustle and bustle of the pipe racks, the screaming and swearing of the workers, the unglamorous workrooms contrasted with glamorous showrooms, the part-Yiddish way of speaking—all send shivers of ecstasy up the spine. To others, these very same conditions are the cause for severe headaches, stomachaches, nausea, and bad nerves.

Some people like to wander around the Garment District buildings on a Saturday to see what vibes (and bargains) they can pick up. The big Broadway buildings (1407 and 1411) are totally locked up, but the smaller buildings have one elevator operator on duty who will take you to a specific floor for an appointment. ***A note to the crafty:*** These elevator operators are savvy professionals; they can spot a tourist a mile away. Don't try to fool them. Simply ask if any of the showrooms do business on Saturday. Many sample sales are posted on the elevator or building doors in the lobby; doormen and elevator operators know everything.

If you're not keen on wandering around this area blindly, get a copy of the *Sales & Bargains* newsletter, which lists sample sales, many of which are in the area. See p. 326 for more information.

Note: The Fur District is adjacent to the Garment Center, further downtown. The streets around 30th Street and Seventh Avenue house small mom-and-pop furriers and suppliers as well as a few skyscrapers packed with showrooms.

DUTY FREE APPAREL
204 W. 35th St., between Seventh and Eighth aves.

This place is sometimes called "Sample Sale." It's not a real sample sale, but instead a store that concentrates on Italian brands and designers, and sells to the Italian-visitors market. The hours are a bit unusual, so note: They are closed on weekends except during the Christmas shopping season and are also closed on Monday, so the hours are Tuesday through Friday 10am to 6pm. There are new arrivals (men's and women's) each week.

WEST 42ND STREET

The block of 42nd Street just west of Fifth Avenue is not glam, but because one of Manhattan's best bookstores has moved here, and because fashion shows are held in Bryant Park, across the street, it's an area to think about passing through. During Fashion Week, usually held in September and February, there are often hostesses on the street who hand out free magazines or even products and samples.

COLUMBUS BOOKS
11 W. 42nd St., between Fifth and Sixth aves.

This is my favorite bookstore in Manhattan, so I am thrilled that they resurfaced after closing on West 57th Street. This is one of the few independent bookstores left, and they offer many specialized customer services and an enormous selection of books. You are more likely to find unusual titles or small publishers represented here than at the big chains.

TIMES SQUARE

I wish I could tell you that the new Times Square is a must-do neighborhood and a shopper's heaven (or haven). However,

though the area has gone through an enormous cleanup (those sex shows and girlie joints are on the way out) and has been vastly improved, this is still not a shopper's paradise. The electronics stores remind me of the ones they have in Hong Kong and make me fearful. Some of the tourist kitsch is fun to giggle over, and there are a lot of fast-food places, movie theaters, legit theaters (of course), and some Broadway souvenirs, but mostly this is an area that is far from classy. You'll find the **Disney Store, Sephora,** and **Virgin Megastore,** as well as a group of snazzy hotels, and even the new Condé Nast Building. McDonald's has a branch with their sign in the form of a flashing Broadway marquis. As I said, all of these attractions are cute, but this area is more for staring at (or perhaps blinking at, due to the glare of all that neon), than for serious shopping.

EATS: Because there are so many offices in this area, and so many visitors, there's every imaginable type of cuisine at any price (especially *over*priced). I am amused by the McDonald's with the marquis on West 42nd itself; I also think it's funny that Red Lobster came from suburbia to open on the edge of Times Square. Those going to the theater who have a little scratch to spend on lunch often prefer the side streets around Sixth Avenue, especially on West 44th and 45th streets, where there are plenty of really nice, trendy restaurants, many of them in hotels.

TRANSPORTATION: Take the 1, 2, 3, 9, N, R, W, Q, S, or 7 to Times Square.

ESPN Zone
4 Times Sq. Broadway, near 42nd St.

This place is so incredible that I just had to include it, especially for you guys. ESPN Zone is run by Disney and is a sports-entertainment center with food, games, large screens for watching sports, and retail.

TIMES SQUARE VISITORS CENTER
1560 Broadway, at 47th St.

This is a good source for information, booking services, MetroCards, maps, and so on. One-stop shopping for the basic visitor needs.

TKTS
Broadway, at W. 47th St.

I tell you about this with a heavy heart, as I hate to see you spend precious New York time in the line. . . . On the other hand, bargains are bargains, so here goes: This is a discount booth that sells same-day half-price theater tickets. The booth, which is sort of a hut, is in the middle of Duffy Square. They only take cash or traveler's checks, no plastic.

TOYS "R" US
1514 Broadway, at 45th St.

If you are interested in retail as theater, check out this amazing branch of the toy retailer. They ain't got one like this back home.

THE THEATER DISTRICT

The Theater District is a subset of Times Square, located in the area from West 42nd Street to West 52nd Street, usually west of Seventh Avenue. I mention it because there is a small amount of specialty retail. Most Broadway productions have their own merchandise, which is sold in the lobby of the theater: This is "you've seen the play now wear the T-shirt" kind of stuff. There are a few good sources for theater souvenirs or theater-related merchandise, as well as the usual TTs (Tourist Traps) with souvenirs—both kinds are mostly on Broadway.

TRANSPORTATION: Take the 1, 2, 3, 9, N, R, W, Q, S, or 7 to Times Square or the 1, 9, N, R, or W to 49th Street.

Colony Music
1619 Broadway, at 49th St.

Musical scores, sheet music, CDs, posters, and other print materials—be still my heart. You can go nuts here. Also, they are open late for after-theater browsing.

Drama Bookshop
250 W. 40th St., between Seventh and Eighth aves.

This place has a complete selection of plays and theater-related publications.

Manny's
156 W. 54th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves.

This is a musician's source for instruments and supplies such as strings. Not to be confused with shoe-guru Manolo Blahnik.

ROCKEFELLER CENTER

On the west side of Fifth Avenue you have everything from the new **Faconnable** to the somewhat new **Anne Fontaine.** The promenade leading to the skating rink has specialty bookstores, chocolate shops, and a branch of **Brookstone.**

TRANSPORTATION: Take the B, D, F, or V trains to Rockefeller Center.

WEST 57TH STREET

No visit to New York is complete without worshipping at the corners of Fifth Avenue and 57th Street—all four of them. Even if you don't buy anything, between the window-shopping and the crowd-staring, this is what you came for.

The block between Fifth Avenue and Avenue of the Americas (Sixth Ave.) on West 57th Street has all sorts of retail. Italian

hotshots such as **Bulgari** and **Laura Biagiotti** show no sign of being disappointed with the location, and there's a **Club Monaco** and the British luxury stationery retailer **Smythson.** Quite a creative mix of stores.

Closer to Sixth Avenue, there's off-pricer **Bolton's** and the drug store chain **Duane Reade.** A branch of **Staples,** the office-supply giant, is on the corner of Sixth Avenue. For cheapie teen clothes and copies of runway looks, don't miss **Strawberry,** part of a large chain, next door to McDonald's at the Sixth Avenue end. The feel of the street changes as you head west, but there is some very interesting retail around Seventh Avenue, so explore.

EATS: Bergdorf's, of course (p. 74).

TRANSPORTATION: Take the F to 57th Street, or the N, R, or W to 5th Avenue at 59th Street.

Ascot Chang
7 W. 57th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves.

This Hong Kong shirt maker to the rich and famous creates custom-made shirts here for about $75 per shirt.

Club Monaco
8 W. 57th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves.

Owned by Ralph Lauren, this place is good for people who like chic basics or who wear black all the time. There's a makeup line too.

Kate's Paperie
140 W. 57th St., between Sixth and Seventh aves.

See p. 142 for details on this fabulous paper store.

Omo Norma Kamali
11 W. 56th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves.

Even though this store is not officially on 57th Street, it fits in with the whole vibe of the street. Sparkly silver flags are usually flying at the doorposts of this home of hip, where the very inventive Ms. Kamali has held court since moving from East 62nd Street. This is cutting-edge chic for those who like clothes that are very unique, from Indian saris to reflective Lycra sportswear.

COLUMBUS CIRCLE

Oh me! Oh my! What a difference a decade makes. This neighborhood has been born again and is now the hottest place in town, home to many big-time restaurants and hotshot chefs and a new high-rise. Welcome to the new Time Warner Center, with a Mandarin Oriental hotel and a large "retail complex," which is basically business-speak for "mall." The shopping/entertainment complex is as large as any regional mall and feels like one too. Not charming, but filled with fashion's international big names. This is more of an academic interest unless you have limited shopping time in New York, since this is a one-stop shopping zone for luxury goods. Also, the western shopping zone on 57th Street melds neatly into this area, so you can do a two-birds-with-one-stone sort of thing.

EATS: Pop into the Time Warner Building and explore either the hotel (Mandarin Oriental), the new Whole Foods (with a sushi bar and sit-down area!), or the mall for eats.

TRANSPORTATION: Take the A, B, C, D, 1, or 9 to 59th Street/Columbus Circle.

RICKY'S

988 Eighth Ave., at 58th St.

There are branches of Ricky's in many parts of Manhattan—this is my regular one and it is a shocking contrast to the glitz and luxury at the Time Warner Center. Ricky's is basically a beauty-supply store, though they sell all sorts of things from wigs to Halloween costumes to vibrators. See p. 23 for more.

UPPER WEST SIDE

This area has everything you might need to buy, and possesses a good New York kind of feel. It's not at all touristy, and it's funky and accessible, but I must admit that it's not thrilling. Broadway has become home to numerous superstores, discounters, and lifestyle resources, while Columbus Avenue has lost its energy and seems to function more as a mall, with a branch of everything you may need and a few specialty retailers geared to the residential community. Amsterdam has been slower to develop but has a few funky stores, antiques shops, and resale shops. I've come to like the area best for the food stores on Broadway.

EATS: Try the cafe upstairs at Fairway (Broadway, at 74th St.).

TRANSPORTATION: Take the 1, 2, 3, 9, B, or C to 72nd Street or the 1 or 9 to 79th Street, or the B or C to 81st Street/Museum of Natural History. There's a crosstown bus that goes through the park, no. 66.

Broadway

Upper Broadway is full of high-rise condos and trendy restaurants these days, though many of the old staples are still here, clustered from the high 60s to the mid-80s. There's **Talbot's** (2289 Broadway, at 82nd St.), and an **Ann Taylor** (2017 Broadway, near 69th St.). Choose from two **Gap** stores in this area (2109, near 69th St., and 2373 Broadway, near 86th St.) or the **Gap Kids** at 2373 Broadway, near 86th Street. Check out **The Body Shop** at 2159 Broadway, near 76th Street. For the teen and tween set, don't forget **Urban Outfitters,** at 2081 Broadway, at 72nd Street. In this area, around West 72nd Street and uptown a block or two, assorted street vendors sell used books.

For off-price retail, **Bolton's** (2251 Broadway, near 80th St.) offers discount women's wear by designers I have never heard of (though there are good basics here), while **Filene's Basement,** 2220 Broadway, at 79th Street, is more likely to carry brands

you know and love. The Filene's Basement in Ladies Mile (p. 15) is better, but while you're here, you might as well pop in. For those who really love to prowl through bins of stuff, there's **Oddlot Jobber** on Broadway, at 72nd Street.

This area has become very residential, so there are stores for real people who live here, ranging from **Barnes & Noble** (Broadway and 66th St.) to a branch of **Fishs Eddy** (2176 Broadway, at 77th St.) for dishes. **Fairway** (Broadway, at 74th St.), the grocery store, has redone itself and competes more than ever with **Zabar's** (Broadway near 80th St.). For those needing home decor items, choose from **Pottery Barn** and **Gracious Home.**

Danskin
159 Columbus Ave., at 67th St.

This place has a wide selection of gym and dance attire for women and girls. They also carry plus sizes.

Eileen Fisher
341 Columbus Ave., at 77th St.

One of the branch stores of my heroine; see p. 26 for more about her.

Amsterdam Avenue

If you decide to stroll along the whole avenue, you may think I've sent you to the wrong neighborhood for shopping. So aim high—head straight to the blocks in the 70s through the 80s to discover craft and design stores, some antiques shops, funky shops offering clothes for children, the city's wildest secondhand clothing resource, and plenty of restaurants and cafes, should your shopping spree leave you famished.

Allan & Suzi Inc.
416 Amsterdam Ave., at 80th St.

If you're looking for an eye-popping ensemble at a bargain price, look no further. Grab a cab and head for this store, which has

an international reputation for retro fashion. Don't even stop to stare at the silver glitter 8-inch platform shoes in the window, just dash right in and start trying on "gently worn" designer items. Some of the merchandise is too funky for me, but with prices that run from $10 to $8,000, there's guaranteed to be something here for everyone's taste and budget. ***Warning:*** I saw a fake Chanel scarf here and it made me very nervous. Make sure you know what you are buying.

RUE ST. DENIS
376 Amsterdam Ave., at 78th St.

Another vintage-clothing shop—it's not to die for, but take a look while you're in the area.

Columbus Avenue

Welcome to the mall. There's no other area in all of Manhattan with a greater concentration of stores that you'd find in any suburban shopping mall. The unique retailing gems are still around, though, it's just that you have to look past all the big chains to find them. But since all the shopping giants are so handy, why not check out the whole scene? Please note that many of the stores in this neighborhood do not open until 11am, and be warned that this area is super-crowded on weekends.

APRIL CORNELL
487 Columbus Ave., at 83rd St.

This is 1 of my 10 favorite stores in Manhattan, and one of the most likely places for you to find items you don't see very often but that you will love for you, your home, or a special little girl. The look is unique, colorful, and I think sensational.

Remember those paisley and madras bedspreads from the 1960s? Now the prints (which look surprisingly like some from Pierre Deux; p. 286) have been pieced together and sewn into bedspreads and quilts. Tablecloths and napkins are a sea of color, swimming with flowers in contrasting shades, with leaves

and vines and swirls of dizzying, delightful colors. There's also jewelry and some nighties and a lot of accessories for the home. Refreshing and unpretentious, colorful and quaint, charming and delicious, the merchandise at April Cornell is not cheap, but it is worth saving for.

There's an excellent sale rack in the back for clothes, and twice a year (in Jan and July) there are sales that are worth flying in for. Last sale season I bought four tablecloths for $12 each, marked down from $85 each.

Betsey Johnson

248 Columbus Ave., at 72nd St.

Teen angel, are you with me? I never met a teenage girl who didn't crave to be dressed by Betsey. So here you go, moms and teens alike—have a look. As wild and wacky as ever, Betsey has stores throughout Manhattan and continues to make waves in all of them. Her clothes are slightly on the cutting edge without being too crazy. Lots of the clothing is clingy, which is why my young teenage girlfriends like it so much. With a dress costing over $100, you might want to tell your favorite teen to save up.

Chapter Six

UPTOWN SHOPPING NEIGHBORHOODS: EAST

DIRECTIONS

Since this is the eastern portion of the uptown neighborhoods chapters of this guide, I have again used 34th Street as the dividing line between uptown and downtown.

EAST 42ND STREET

East 42nd Street is not much of a neighborhood, per se. But wait, there's action on two fronts. Maybe more. **Grand Central Station** (42nd St., between Vanderbilt and Lexington aves.) is sublimely gorgeous and filled with great stores. And further east, at the corner of Lexington Avenue and 42nd Street, Ann Taylor, for some reason, decided to open its first official **Loft** store (Loft is its discount brand that used to be reserved for outlet malls). The company has been so successful here that there's now a Loft shop in every neighborhood in Manhattan, but this was the first. It's the Old Navy-is-to-Gap (lower prices from the same parent brand) theory of retail, except that most of the clothing here looks somewhat cheap.

Across the street (145 E. 42nd St.) is a small branch of **Forman's,** a Lower East Side discounter, which has moved up in the world and even onto Fifth Avenue (though there's still a

Lower East Side address). It doesn't discount enormously (about 25%), but I always have fun here because they carry brands that fit me. When the merchandise gets old, it's marked way down. Forman's carries brands like Jones New York, Ellen Tracy, and Ralph Lauren, so it's a good source to know about. They are closed on Saturday.

The eastern portion of shopping on East 42nd Street, and the subsequent opportunities on Third Avenue moving uptown toward 50th Street, will mostly make you feel like you are in a mall—there are many branch stores of the big-name multiples. This is an area for those using Grand Central Station or who live nearby; it has nothing that you need to go out of your way to find.

EATS: There are various fast-food places on East 42nd Street, east of Fifth Avenue, or you can get picnic foods at the excellent market or upscale food court (downstairs) inside Grand Central.

TRANSPORTATION: You can take the S, 7, 4, 5, or 6 to Grand Central Station. You can also get here via bus.

SEAN JOHN
475 Fifth Ave., at 41st St.

Although I really don't think you need or want this address, I don't want you to think I am out of it and don't know cool when I see it. This is the first store in Sean "P. Diddy" Combs's retail empire. The clothes are urban casual and actually great for young men with high style and fashion attitude.

MIDTOWN FIFTH AVENUE

What locals refer to as midtown is what visitors sometimes consider downtown—the main shopping guts of the central city. The chief shopping area of Manhattan is also in the main business area—between 57th Street and 34th Street. Main

Street USA in this case is Fifth Avenue, which is a legend in its own time. Fifth Avenue is not really a neighborhood or a street, but more of a mall that allows traffic to transverse it in a downtown direction. For my purposes, I have dubbed midtown Fifth Avenue as a neighborhood because it has a whole personality of its own.

Fifth Avenue is changing dramatically. There are plenty of affordable places these days: Get a look at the new **Mexx** (650 Fifth Ave., at 52nd St.), which is a Dutch brand that sells high fashion for men, women, and children, at affordable prices. It's slightly more upmarket than H&M in terms of quality (and price).

To get in the spirit, begin your tour at Fifth Avenue and 58th Street, the General Motors Building, home of some corporate offices. Walk down Fifth Avenue all the way to 34th St., noting the changes in the crowds, the types of stores, the way the people are dressed, and the very feel of the air. It's fancy uptown and gets less so as you walk downtown. There are specialty stores like **Bergdorf Goodman** (two stores; one for men and one for women across the street from each other on Fifth Ave., between 57th and 58th sts.) and **Takashimaya** (693 Fifth Ave., at 54th St.), a drop-dead fancy, elegant store that despite its Japanese name and ownership is not particularly Japanese in style.

I'm not certain which is more a tribute to human spirit and imagination, **The Disney Store** (711 Fifth Ave.) or **Gianni Versace** (647 Fifth Ave.). The **Gap** store and the **Brooks Brothers** stores are terrifyingly alike, while the **NBA Store** is in a class by itself . . . one of the best stores in New York. Even if you don't buy anything in stores like this, go in and stare—this is the kind of extravagant detail that has made New York The Big Apple. This is what sizzle is all about.

After you're done gaping, you can hit Rockefeller Center, which, although in this area, has been listed separately (p. 99) because it is a universe unto itself and is technically on the west side.

EATS: I'm always at **Burger Heaven** (p. 75), but you can pop into any number of eats at Rockefeller Center or the cafe at

Saks Fifth Avenue. There's a **Dean & Deluca** gourmet grocery at Rock Center with tables upstairs. If you're with your kids, try the cafe downstairs at the **NBA Store** (p. 109).

TRANSPORTATION: My favorite subway line is the F train, which will get you (along with the E train) to Fifth Avenue and 53rd Street, exactly where you want to be.

Forman's
560 Fifth Ave., at 46th St.

Forman's is part of the family of off-price stores dotting downtown and midtown. I like the East 42nd Street branch better, but this is a good start if you are in the area. Major American brands are discounted about 25%; I load up on Jones New York.

H&M
640 Fifth Ave., at 51st St.

H&M was the signal to the world that Fifth Avenue had changed, that New York retail had changed, and that power goes to the people. H&M stands for Hennes & Mauritz, a Swedish retailer known for teenybopper clothes for men, women, and even kids at very good prices. They can knock off the latest trends from the catwalks faster than you can say "what's new pussycat?"

The NBA Store
666 Fifth Ave., at 52nd St.

From the sublime to the ridiculous, perhaps, but this store is unlike anything in the world—a new generation of retail entertainment that owes its inspiration to NikeTown but has more bells and whistles. To say nothing of WNBA Barbie! Most of the store is below ground; walk down the ramp—don't be lazy, just do it. The merchandise is inventive and creative and there is a snack bar and plenty of activities; the prices on some of the team merchandise are outrageous, but there are plenty of affordable items too.

TAKASHIMAYA
693 Fifth Ave., at 55th St.

If you only have time to see one store in Manhattan and you may not even have time to buy, let me make life easy for you—speed through Takashimaya. The store is a museum to good taste; every little detail is breathtaking to behold. It all looks incredibly expensive, but some of it is actually affordable. The point, however, is not to buy. Feasting your eyes and your soul is the most important thing.

If you think that because this is a Japanese store that they are only going to sell Japanese merchandise or designer items for Japanese visitors, you're wrong. The store artfully blends Asian inspiration with country French and sophisticated Continental looks to provide one smooth international arena of finesse and magic. The florist is Christian Tortu, the toast of Paris.

MIDDLE MADISON AVENUE

I call midtown Madison Avenue (from 57th St. south to 42nd St.) Middle Mad. The lower end of the stretch, in the 40s, is very geared toward haberdashery. If you are looking for the older version of **Brooks Brothers** (346 Madison Ave., at 44th St.), you'll still find it, along with many other big-name haberdashers who serve men and women; there's **Joseph A. Banks** from Boston (366 Madison Ave., at 46th St.), **Paul Stuart** (Madison Ave., at 45th St.), and **Thomas Pink** (520 Madison Ave., at 54th St.).

The stretch beginning around 54th Street is filled with a mélange of big names from malls and magazines. A new flagship **J. Crew,** at 347 Madison Ave. (between 44th and 45th sts.) recently opened, and there's a branch of the off-pricer Daffy's. I like to hit this branch of Eileen Fisher. Note that next door is Talbot's and then the new Talbot's Men. This is very real shopping without being overly glam—it's just all here. I use this area as a springboard to 57th Street or to Bloomingdale's.

EATS: Try Burger Heaven on Madison Avenue between 55th and 56th streets (p. 75).

TRANSPORTATION: One of the reasons this area is so easy to shop is that you can enjoy the E or V subway stop at Fifth Avenue and 53rd Street. If you are beginning lower on Madison and then plan to walk uptown (good idea), take the 4, 5, 6, 7, or S to Grand Central Station.

American Girl Place
609 Fifth Ave., at 49th St.

If you have a young daughter, you know about this amazing series of dolls and the marketing concept that goes behind them—dolls with their own ethnic history and personal history, and storybooks that elaborate on each. This new shop has dolls, a tearoom, and a theater for events.

Belgian Shoes
110 E. 55th St., between Madison and Park aves.

There is no more "in" and New York place than this shoe store, which has its own look and is therefore an icon of style—flat shoes in zillions of colors and styles, with a distinctive cut and shape.

Coach
342 Madison Ave., at 45th St.

If you're addicted to Coach handbags, this is one of their Manhattan shops.

Crouch & Fitzgerald/The Sherpa Shop
400 Madison Ave., at 46th St.

A staple for fine leather goods for as long as I can recall, this store has been sold and downsized, but still has plenty of the great merchandise for which it is famous. The store is expanding to carry briefcases and carry-alls for business women and travelers. The luggage selection consists of the usual big brand

names at top-of-the-line prices and the house brand of luggage, which is crafted from canvas and belting leather, and is handsome, practical, and well made.

Better yet is the in-store **Sherpa Shop,** which sells doggy totes and travel gear. I use a tote that has buckles for the seat belt in the car, so I no longer have to worry that my dog will go flying if I have to hit the brakes.

DAFFY'S

335 Madison Ave., at 44th St.

If you can't get to the bigger Daffy's downtown on lower Fifth Avenue, you'll make do here, just as I do. This store isn't as big, but you can still expect to bump into some bargains for men, women, and children. Men's clothing is upstairs in a small space; and there's a large selling space down the escalator where women's and children's clothing, as well as underwear and accessories, are sold.

Sometimes you find the big names, sometimes you don't. The discount is hard to measure because you rarely find current merchandise here. Don't worry about it.

The escalator only goes down, but there is a way out. There's an elevator located in the corner of the children's department. You may not want to leave, however.

EILEEN FISHER

521 Madison Ave., at 53rd St.

I consider this my own personal find and success story; I actually once worried that Fisher wouldn't make it in the big time. Silly me!

Positioned as a way-of-life dress style, Fisher's clothes are moderately priced, yet high on fashion, chic, and comfort. Colors are the selling point: They are always new, with an almost European palette. Clothes are pull-on styles, mostly in solids—all you do is mix and match—but because of the quality of the fabric and the fabulous colors, they make a great fashion

statement. There are other stores around town. Shop them all. The outlet store in New Jersey is worth the schlep (p. 319).

PARK AVENUE

For the most part, Park Avenue is not a street with too much retail. Instead, it has tulips. However, there are some nuggets right in the heart of town, in the mid-50s.

TRANSPORTATION: Take the N, R, or W to 5th Avenue at 59th Street or the 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Avenue/59th Street.

J.S. SUAREZ
450 Park Ave., at 57th St.

This is a leading resource for designer-style handbags without the designer label or price tag.

SYM'S
400 Park Ave., at 54th St.

Branch of the off-pricer! Right here in the heart of town! Yegads! What fun! Several floors with men's, women's, and even kids' clothing—lotsa Italian designer stuff, shoes, some accessories, and fragrance.

T. ANTHONY
445 Park Ave., at 55th St.

Distinctive and chic canvas and leather luggage is sold here.

EAST 57TH STREET

This is New York! This is what you came for. Fifty-seventh Street is both a state of mind and a neighborhood. Interestingly, no one street in Manhattan represents the new retail scene more

than East 57th Street. Traditionally, it's been a high-ticket address for residential and retailing real estate, especially where it bisects Fifth Avenue. In the space of a couple of years, however, it has changed from one of the fanciest addresses a store could boast to a street with two divergent personalities. There's the original personality: drop-dead chic, as typified by many big brands, and then there's the other personality, casual chic in black or khaki, represented by the LVMH firms (Louis Vuitton Moet Hennesey) and brands like **Dior** and **Vuitton. Chanel** and **Montblanc** are also here.

Although the street stretches across the island, the actual luxe shopping area begins on the East Side at Park Avenue and ends on the West Side in the middle of the block between Fifth and Sixth avenues. In these blocks you'll find a few expensive antiques shops (many are upstairs) and art galleries, quite a few clothing shops representing the best of Europe's retail elite, and America's own retail landmark, **Tiffany & Co.**

You'll also find a few shocking surprises: **Daffy's** on East 57th Street (between Lexington and Park aves.) brings stylish discounting right to the upper crust, and **Borders,** a very good bookstore, takes up the street level of The Ritz Tower (Park Ave., at 57th St.). Most exciting is the fact that **Louis Vuitton** took over the Warner Brothers Company Store space on the corner of 57th Street and Fifth Avenue for their new flagship.

EATS: My secret spot is the cafe in Bergdorf Goodman Men's store, 745 Fifth Ave., at 58th Street (p. 74). If there's something to celebrate, I head for 5757, the restaurant inside the Four Seasons Hotel (p. 83). A secret spot for coffee: upstairs at Frederic Fekkai (p. 115). There's a Burger Heaven, 536 Madison Ave., at 55th Street (p. 75).

TRANSPORTATION: I've always considered Fifth Avenue at 57th Street to be the center of Manhattan shopping and a destination you will come upon as if drawn by a supernatural force. If the mystic forces don't work, then hop an F train to 57th Street, or an N, R, or W train to 5th Avenue at 59th Street.

Dana Buchman
65 E. 57th St., near Park Ave.

Owned by the Liz Claiborne people, but operated as a separate and more upscale line, Dana Buchman's clothes are available in department stores and now in the designer's first freestanding store. The line is mostly for working women, and hovers between moderate and moderately expensive; some looks are boring, others are classics. There's a selection of petite sizes and special orders for plus sizes. This is a good standard for the working woman to know about.

Frederic Fekkai
15 E. 57th St., between Fifth and Madison aves., upstairs.

Talk about hidden! This salon-cum-spa doesn't even have frontage on the street, but because it is a division of Chanel, no one cares. Fekkai was the star hairstylist of Bergdorf Goodman before corporate France snapped him up and forced him to open an incredibly chic villalike series of spaces in the Chanel high-rise here. Not only can you have your hair done, you can also get all sorts of spa treatments. Or you can simply have a coffee here. They sell their beauty and hair products and their makeup line, as well as handbags and headbands.

Ghurka
41 E. 57th St., at Madison Ave.

Despite the exotic-sounding name, which conjures up colonial India, this is a luggage-and-leather-goods store. It sells a fabulous line of canvas and leather items made in a very specific look, which I call "Ralph Lauren Fisherman Meets Isak Dinesen on Safari." The items are outrageously expensive, very statusy, and quite chic. There is an outlet store in Norwalk, Connecticut, where the prices, even when discounted 50%, are also outrageous. But Ghurka is a great store with beautifully made goods.

SONY'S WONDER TECHNOLOGY LAB
550 Madison Ave., at 56th St.

This is a virtual-reality amusement park/museum, kinda like a Nike store that doesn't have any shoes. Here, you can explore all sorts of technology and browse the selection of CDs, cassettes, and other merchandise.

UPPER MADISON AVENUE (57TH STREET & BEYOND)

The average visitor to Manhattan perceives Madison Avenue as a dream shopping stretch that begins at 57th Street and works its way uptown. Although the street has changed its personality many times, it's still a great place to shop and enjoy stores representing the big names in European fashion and style, and in international creativity. The stroll from 57th Street to 79th is a must-do . . . even if you are just window-shopping. The little whimsical stores are long gone, but there are a series of fancy "drugstores" that are enormous fun. You'll also find several affordable shoe stores. The street offers all price points, so don't think it's too pricey for you.

A lot of stores have moved around, including **Hermès,** which moved into the neighborhood from East 57th Street. Part of the movement on the street is related to the fact that many stores bailed out of their valuable leases and moved to side streets right off Madison. For example, **Dooney & Bourke** is now at East 60th Street.

EATS: I like the restaurant in The Mark (p. 84), and Café Boulud (p. 70), but I also like a diner called Three Guys, which serves breakfast all day long and is located at 960 Madison Ave., at 75th Street. If you are walking all the way up Madison, shopping as you go, there are two other branches of this diner: 1232 Madison Ave., at 88th Street, and 1381 Madison Ave., at 96th Street.

TRANSPORTATION: I walk from the F subway stop at 57th Street, but you can also take a bus uptown and pop off at any point on Madison Avenue.

BOYD'S
655 Madison Ave., at 60th St.

Boyd's is a Madison Avenue pharmacy that has evolved into a mecca for makeup, hair accessories, foreign bath products, and hard-to-find specialty items. It is very "Madison Avenue," and is a resource for some of the wealthiest residents in New York. First developed to serve the people who live in the neighborhood, Boyd's is now a thriving business and a "destination." The store provides lots of service, plenty of makeovers, testers and spritzes, and the mom-and-pop atmosphere that makes you feel rich and pampered. No bargains, but then, price isn't the point, is it?

CLYDE'S
926 Madison Ave., at 73rd St.

Geographically positioned between Boyd's and Zitomer's, Clyde's is one of the fanciest drugstores you have ever seen. It's also newer, more sophisticated, and neater than the others I mention in this section. The store carries an enormous number of beauty lines from Europe that are hard to find in the United States, as well as many American brands that you've never seen before. As a bonus, I find that their clients are fun to stare at or eavesdrop on.

H2O PLUS
650 Madison Ave., at 60th St.

While this is a branch store of a chain, I think you will enjoy shopping here. As the name would imply, it sells goodies for the bath—gels, shampoos, toys for kids, travel kits, and some aromatherapy items. You can find great gifts (some in the $10 price range!) to take home as souvenirs for just about every age on your gift list, though the kiddie bath toys and products are the best.

JEAN-PAUL GAULTIER
759 Madison Ave., at 65th St.

While all designer stores are listed in the "Resources" chapter (chapter 8), I have made note of this store because of its design properties—it is the first boutique in New York created by hot designer Philippe Starck.

PIERRE DEUX
625 Madison Ave., at 58th St.

This is a new location for a New York icon. The store has a new look, but still specializes in country French home and lifestyle items. See p. 286 for more.

RALPH LAUREN
888 Madison Ave., at 72nd St., and 867 Madison Ave., at 72nd St.

I realize that you don't need me to tell you about Ralph Lauren or to explain to you that there are now not one but two shops right here on Madison Avenue, but here goes anyway: You absolutely must visit these stores, if only to get a look-see. The Rhinelander mansion is one of the most beautiful stores you will ever visit in your life. And then there's the new store across the street that specializes in active sporting gear and the Double R line. Both could be tourist sights; they could sell tickets for admission and I would certainly pay up. See p. 190 for more about Lauren's style. There is also a Ralph Lauren store in SoHo (381 W. Broadway, at Broome St.).

ZITOMER
969 Madison Ave., at 76th St.

Boyd's (described earlier) and Zitomer are spiritually related, although they are rather different from one another and are about 10 blocks apart. Zitomer also began as a pharmacy and might have become Boyd's, but instead they went several steps past Boyd's in terms of size, stock, selection, and sphere—

Zitomer is really a tiny department store, and even has a pet boutique selling pet accessories and gourmet dog bones.

Every nook and cranny of this store—and it has many, so don't be deceived when you first walk in—is filled with American and European beauty, bath, health, and luxury items. Next door, Zitomer carries a wide range of costume jewelry, hair accessories, pet accessories, and a cashmere shawl or two in season; they had real (not fake) Judith Leiber handbags when I was there last. See p. 162 for more.

BLOOMINGDALE'S COUNTRY

Bloomingdale's may be the promised land of retail, but there is plenty of nearby shopping as well. There are good stores on Lexington Avenue leading to Bloomingdale's from East 57th Street, and on Third Avenue leading away from Bloomingdale's (in the uptown direction).

On the Lex side, marching from 57th Street right past Bloomingdale's, you'll find that the stores are mostly teen-oriented. The **Diesel Superstore,** 770 Lexington Ave., at 60th Street, is the headquarters for the Italian brand of jeans, and also sells trendsetting clothing beyond jeans.

On Third Avenue you get more upmarket clothing chains, such as **Club Monaco,** and you get **Dylan's Candy Bar,** a fancy penny-candy store with international sweets (and lovely gift baskets), dreamt up by Ralph Lauren's daughter, Dylan (p. 195). At 70th Street, don't miss **Gracious Home,** which stocks everything you could ever need or want for renovating your home (p. 270).

There's another area that is really too far away to include in this neighborhood, but bears searching out if you are furnishing a home: Under the bridge on First Avenue (between 59th and 61st sts.), you'll find a branch of the superstore **Bed Bath & Beyond** as well as **The Terence Conran Shop** (see below).

Stay away from this whole area on weekends if you can. To explore the neighborhood fully, start at Bloomingdale's, and

then branch out according to your energy. The side toward Third Avenue tends to be older and more residential; the Lex area is more teeny-tweeny in terms of stores and teeny-weeny in terms of tiny specialty shops.

EATS: Gino, 780 Lexington Ave., at 61st Street, is the locals' Italian restaurant of choice. They only take cash! No reservations! If you want something quicker, there are plenty of fast-food places nearby, and there are eats right inside Bloomie's. If you get further over east to the Feeling Groovy Bridge (59th St. Bridge) you can eat at Terence Conran's store.

TRANSPORTATION: There's a nice big subway station right under Bloomie's; you can reach it by taking the 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Avenue/59th Street. If you are going a bit further uptown, take the 6 subway to 68th Street/Hunter College.

AVEDA
1122 Third Ave., at 65th St.

This is one of a handful of Aveda shops in the city; the lifestyle/beauty products are sensational and are of such high quality that you won't mind the high price. Although the products are sold all over the U.S., and the world, it's a very New York kind of product and makes a great gift or souvenir. Hair products are the best items to buy.

BED BATH & BEYOND
410 E. 61st St., at 59th St. Bridge, near First Ave.

Just so you know it's here. Also see p. 268.

KATE'S PAPERIE
1282 Third Ave., at 72nd St.

Another branch of the fancy, expensive, expressive, creative paper-and-crafts store. There's nothing like it any place else in the world. See p. 142 for more on the store.

Marimekko
1262 Third Ave., at 72nd St.

This Finnish graphic artist's splash-printed fabrics, clothes, and accessories have moved here from Madison Avenue. You'll find great colors, high style, good gift items, and great kids stuff.

Scoop
1277 Third Ave., at 73rd St.

This place is small and hip and filled with accessories for fashionistas.

Sephora
1129 Third Ave., at 67th St.

This branch of Sephora serves the Upper East Side as a beauty supermarket and purveyor of many makeup brands you have never heard of. They sell the Bourjois line of French cosmetics, made in the same factories as Chanel makeup.

Terence Conran Shop
407 E. 59th St., at First Ave.

For international travelers who know Conran's stores, note the difference—this one uses Mr. Conran's full name because of legal technicalities in the U.S. This is the same store chain, and it still specializes in Mr. Conran's brand of home style and wit. See p. 272 for more on the store.

EAST 84TH STREET

This is a residential area that is experiencing its second retail life—the first didn't go so well and the area did not become the heralded new center of the Upper East Side. Today the area is filled with most of the big-name chains. What's very interesting is that Third Avenue from 77th to 84th is beginning to

get branch stores of the more cute local boutiques. There's nothing much here for visitors, but the area is coming of age. Again. I'll keep you posted.

CARNEGIE HILL/UPPER MADISON

A residential area of grace and refinement, Carnegie Hill, in the low 90s, has a few select shops clustered on Madison Avenue (I call this area "Upper Mad"). Some are branches of European stores (**Jacadi** and **Bonpoint,** both at 91st St.), some are original retailers. **Penny Whistle** (between 91st and 92nd sts.), the innovative kiddie store, began in this neighborhood because its owners live here.

The neighborhood gets less European and more midtown Manhattan–like as you walk downtown, so by the time you get to 86th Street, there are branches of big chains—from discounter **Bolton's** to mall faves such as **Williams-Sonoma,** the kitchen and cookware mavens from San Francisco.

If you haven't yet caught up with **Eileen Fisher** (p. 112 for my rave), there's a store at 79th Street (1039 Madison Ave.). **Adrien Linford** is a great little gift shop in the neighborhood. Visit the uptown (original) branch at 1339 Madison Ave., at 94th Street; see p. 273 for a full listing.

Mixed in with the specialty stores and the branches of chain stores are several resale shops—most of them have upstairs addresses, so don't be afraid to climb a flight of stairs.

TRANSPORTATION: Take the 4, 5, or 6 to 86th Street or the 6 to 96th Street.

Chapter Seven

DOWNTOWN SHOPPING NEIGHBORHOODS

Including Brooklyn

DOWNTOWN IS A STATE OF MIND

You've heard of Uptown Girl? Forget her. Manhattan has gone Downtown crazy. Downtown has become the place to be—hotels are opening up left and right, and some travelers don't even want to venture north of Union Square.

Downtown has become so uptown that limos pull into districts that once gave people the creepy-crawlies, and the Meat Packing District is the epitome of trendy.

Meanwhile, a lot more than a tree is growing across the bridge in Brooklyn. Brooklyn has really become a garden—and two areas, DUMBO (Down Under Manhattan Bridge Overpass) and Williamsburg, have recently started blooming in full force. Many young people who can't afford to live in Manhattan are now living in these areas.

Note that the expression "downtown" also refers to the Wall Street and World Trade Center area. A lot of the stores in the area are not only back in business but could certainly use your patronage. Several new hotels and business venues have opened at the water's edge, and the new PATH station—for trains to New Jersey—has opened as well.

DEPARTMENT OF SILLY NAMES

The name "SoHo" makes sense (it indicates the area south of Houston St.), and we accept it easily enough, but now, as James Bond might say, enough is enough. Every downtown district has a name: Most were created from abbreviations of their geographic locations (north of Little Italy [NoLita], north of Houston [NoHo], and so on). And then there's Alphabet City—this is the part of Manhattan that is so far east that the avenues have run out of numbers and have taken on letters of the alphabet.

LOWER FIFTH AVENUE

Hop off the Fifth Avenue bus at the Flatiron Building (23rd St.) and check out the scene on lower Fifth Avenue, South of Flatiron, which some call SoFi. You will be walking downtown on Fifth Avenue, headed toward 14th Street; this area is so safe and clean it's almost a mall.

Lower Fifth was the start of something big years ago; now it doesn't have as much energy as when it first got going. However, it's still well situated and worth a visit since the neighborhood puts you within walking distance of the **Union Square Green Market, ABC Carpet & Home,** all the discounters and big box stores on Sixth Avenue, and the streets of SoHo and the Village. If you are really up for a walk, you can even make it to **Jeffrey** (14th St., at Tenth Ave.), but that really is a long way.

If you take Broadway further downtown (from Union Sq.), you'll hit **Forbidden Planet,** 840 Broadway, at 13th Street, for comics galore and **Strand Book Store,** 828 Broadway, at East 12th Street, for discounted new and well-priced used books (including current bestsellers). By the time you get to 12th Street, you will be in an antiques neighborhood.

By East 9th Street, you've hit an array of stores so hip and hot that they attract busloads of Japanese tourists. Head east (take a left) on East 9th Street to get to the heart of this area.

EATS: Hit **Terra 47,** 47 E. 12th St. (✆ **212/358-0103**), for an organic lunch with fresh everything and, often, celebrity diners . . . or try **Craft,** 47 E. 19th St. (✆ **212/780-0880**), where the chef has won awards and the daily lunch costs $20.04 in 2004, $20.05 in 2005, and so on. There is also a cafe inside **ABC Carpet & Home.** Also, don't miss the Green Market at Union Square.

TRANSPORTATION: Take the time to look up listings beforehand, and plan your day accordingly, or use a map (p. 8) to see how the neighborhoods in this area interconnect. You haven't got a second to waste, as there's more here than can possibly be done in a day. This part of Manhattan is the kicking-off point for further tours to Brooklyn, SoHo, or Greenwich Village.

Fifth Avenue buses stop at the Flatiron Building before continuing downtown on Fifth. If you want to really see the whole area, pop off the subway at either 23rd Street and Fifth Avenue (take F or V) or 23rd Street and Broadway, which at this point in Manhattan geography goes easterly as it heads downtown; your train here would be the R or W. Or you can take the subway to Union Square and work your way west and uptown.

Note: If you are curious about exploring the "new" Brooklyn—Williamsburg (p. 156), the subway stop at Union Square is your ticket to ride—take the L train to Bedford Avenue, only one stop away!

ABC Carpet & Home

888 Broadway, at 19th St.

Be still my heart. If I were making a movie of New York's best stores, this would be the star. Years ago it was just a carpet store. But then it expanded into bed linens and now it has everything you could possibly need (or want) for your home—and with its focus on selection over price, you may find yourself wanting a lot more than you can reasonably buy.

Note: Old hands may feel wistful, since the store has pared down the drama, and the look has become more Zen-like. It's still a fabulous store, but if you are returning to a scene of passion, hold your heartstrings.

ANTHROPOLOGIE
85 Fifth Ave., at 16th St.

Anthropologie is the brainchild of the man who created Urban Outfitters, and the store sells all sorts of clothes for men and women as well as home furnishings and gift items. It's all very warehouse-cum-touch-this-and-that-store, with a look that's rich hippie chic. You'll also find some ethnic style here, in the form of French, Indian, and other overseas merchandise and decor. Prices are not bad.

I love this place—it's certainly one of my favorite stores in New York and maybe even in the world. I find that teens and tweens adore this store.

There's another branch in SoHo, but I like this one; it's the cherry on the whipped cream of this shopping district. There's more stuff downstairs.

B. SHACKMAN & CO.
85 Fifth Ave., at 16th St.

This novelty broker sells to the public, offering Victorian reproductions such as Victorian valentines, stocking stuffers, cards, and other small gifts for very good prices.

CLUB MONACO
160 Fifth Ave., at 21st St.; other locations.

This is a Canadian chain, now owned by Ralph Lauren, with about 150 stores dotted all over the world. It's great for cutting-edge fashion at affordable prices—trendies should do well here. There's even a makeup line. There are a few stores all over town, but this is the flagship.

Daffy's
111 Fifth Ave., at 18th St.

Daffy's is one of New York's best bargain basements: 35,000 square feet on two levels, jammed with bargains for men, women, and children. They even sell luggage here! Stock varies tremendously—a lot of it comes from big-name department stores after they've taken it off the floor. I've done very well finding designer men's sports jackets on the markdown rack, but I rarely hit upon anything great in women's wear. There are also Daffy's branches in other parts of the city.

Eileen Fisher
103 Fifth Ave., between 17th and 18th sts.

This store features the comfortable, easy-to-wear, droopy-Japanese chic that Fisher is famous for. The color palette is sublime, and the sale prices are fabulous because the regular retail prices are already quite affordable. The store also has other branches.

Fishs Eddy
889 Broadway, at 19th St.

Stop sweating, palms! Please, take my credit cards away before I do it again! Did someone say dishes? I am bonkers for dishes. And thus for Fishs. Fishs Eddy's original concept was to buy up and resell restaurant supply and hotel has-beens, but the store has become so popular that it now casts old molds and sets its own trends. You'll find that prices vary from the what-a-deal category to what approaches stratospheric prices for almost-ready-for-the-big-time collectibles. Dinner plates from a fine London hotel go for about $50 a pop—not cheap. But you will have a ball as you explore this small, crammed museum of old dishes and hotel services. Amen, and pass the gravy boat.

ILLUMINATIONS
873 Broadway, at 18th St.

I am usually not that big on candle stores (they make me sneeze or cease to breathe properly), but this place is almost as good as a French candle store and has tons of style. Now that everyone is into nesting and staying at home, candle fashions are becoming a big part of home decor. They do an adorable egg carton–style gift box here, and sell many stylish seasonal items. There's also a branch at Rockefeller Center.

JO MALONE
Flatiron Building, 949 Broadway, at 23rd St.

The stores selling the products of Jo Malone, British cult heroine in the world of scent and beauty, are now owned by Lauder, hence the New York store. The prices are outrageously high, but the product is unique. Note that while this shop is in the Flatiron Building, it faces east. See p. 252 for more information on Jo Malone.

MEXX
19 Union Sq., at 15th St.

Mexx is where you'll find very hot designs—mostly inspired by the big names in fashion that no real person can afford to buy—at fair prices. There's another Mexx in midtown, right on Fifth Avenue, but this one boasts the flavor of this downtown neighborhood.

PAUL SMITH
108 Fifth Ave., at 16th St.

Smith is a London designer known for his inventive ways of designing. He creates quality clothes that appear to be traditional but have a tiny twist to them, such as use of unusual colors or fabrics. While he makes menswear and women's wear, many items in the store can be worn by either gender.

Much of it is very hip. Prices are high to match the quality, but the store does have sales.

Union Square Green Market
16th to 14th sts., at Broadway.

I don't care if you're a tourist or a local, you do too need a green market. This one has a very special New York feel about it, especially in fall, when the whole city celebrates the change from the dog days of summer to the crisp autumn. There are vendors selling farm-grown greens, and farm-made cheeses and wines and ciders and juices and fruits and veggies and even flowers and it is simply heaven . . . although I'm not sure if heaven is this crowded on a Saturday. The best apples I've ever eaten in my life came from this market.

While the market is a regular event (Mon, Wed, Fri, and Sat), it is a tad sparse in the winter months and March is downright bleak. Saturday is always the busiest day. There's not that much in the way of prepared foods, so you can't really go to the market and walk away with a true picnic.

MEAT PACKING DISTRICT

Don't look now, but the Meat Packing District is now known as MEPA by some people. There goes the neighborhood.

I think this is one of my favorite parts of the new New York, not because everyone says this is *the* spot, but because it still feels, uh, raw. Yes, there are wholesale butchers and sights to unsettle you. It is very, very real down here, especially on 14th Street itself, right around Ninth and Tenth avenues. But like many other places, it's becoming more and more gentrified every day.

Blame it all on **Jeffrey,** 449 W. 14th St., near Tenth Avenue, who has created his own version of Barney's in a great big space in what was the middle of nowhere. Jeffrey made this part of

New York important to know about. Unfortunately, his store is not doing too well, which just goes to show that you can build it, they will come, but they might not buy enough to pay the rent. For more on Jeffrey, see p. 24.

On the other hand, if Jeffrey can just manage to hang on, the real estate gods will probably saint him. Even before Jeffrey arrived, there were signs of the times: clubs, galleries, restaurants, and uptowners slumming it with a smugness that bordered on glee. There are several great restaurants in this part of town, and it's very much an area where you go to be seen or to tell others you have been. Just knowing where Gansevoort Street is in Manhattan means you are swinging with the in crowd. Go, and wander.

Several other name designers have moved into the area and now the hairdressers and day spas are coming along. Try to book into **Sally Hershberger Downtown,** 423 W. 14th St. (✆ **212/206-8700**), if you want to be as blonde as Meg Ryan.

EATS: There's always a hot new restaurant to try in this district, but **Pastis,** 9 Ninth Ave., at Little West 12th Street (✆ **212/929-4844**), is the icon where you can worship trendiness and get the whole scene. This French bistro, serving steak frites and the like, is more gorgeous than a movie set, and the crowd is more chic than any set of extras standing by the bar. The insecure should not try this.

TRANSPORTATION: I don't want to sound like a wimp, or someone who doesn't do public transportation, but I take a taxi to Jeffrey (449 W. 14th St., near Tenth Ave.), and then explore on foot from there. The reason I do this is that the area is extremely spread out and even the subway stations don't get you that close. Do note, however, that you *can* take the A, C, E, or L to 14th Street and Eighth Avenue, or the C or E to 23rd Street and Eighth Avenue . . . or the crosstown bus on 14th Street. Free transfers on buses, you know!

CHELSEA

The dimensions of Chelsea, one of the city's hot neighborhoods, are changing enormously: Chelsea is now considered the area from the West 20s all the way to 14th Street, and from Seventh Avenue to Eleventh Avenue.

Formerly a mostly residential area, Chelsea began to make news when many art galleries from SoHo relocated to this district. Then **Comme des Garçons** (see below) became the first must-see clothing boutique—and you must see it: part gallery, part boutique, part museum of modern art.

Chelsea has expanded so much that the best flea market in New York is in danger: Word is that the parking lots where this weekend event is held, on Sixth Avenue and 23rd Street, might be sold at any point to make room for new high-rise buildings. Note that like every alternative retail district, the hours are alternative—consider noon to 7pm as their norm.

EATS: For lunch, try **Cafeteria,** 119 Seventh Ave., at 18th Street—I love the crowd and the food, especially the lemon soufflé pancakes. And I love the fact that you can get breakfast for lunch. No advance reservations.

TRANSPORTATION: Chelsea is huge, and the distances between the avenues are so large that you cannot stroll and shop the way you can in SoHo and NoLita. If you have a car and just want to look around, that's great, but the whole area is relatively impossible to do on foot. You could also pick a place that you want to start (perhaps one of the galleries listed later) and take a taxi. By subway, take the 1 or 9 to Seventh Avenue at 23rd Street or the C or E to Eighth Avenue and 23rd Street and be prepared to walk.

Barney's Co-op

236 W. 18th St., between Seventh and Eighth aves.

Barney's answer to Jeffrey on West 14th Street is this store, housed in part of the company's old warehouse, and meant to

be young, hip, and attractive to the kids of the regular Barney's shoppers.

BARNEY'S WAREHOUSE
255 W. 17th St., between Seventh and Eighth aves.

Twice a year (once in winter and once in summer), Barney's still hosts their famous warehouse sale at this warehouse facility near their Co-op store. The sale is quite an event, and people really do line up. Prices are changed daily, so markdowns can be 50% to 80% off the original retail prices on clothing for men, women, and children, as well as gifts. The hours of the sale are announced in ads in the newspapers *(New York Times)* and they do differ as the sale progresses.

COMME DES GARÇONS
520 W. 22nd St., near Tenth Ave.

It's worth a taxi trip directly to this address; don't miss it if you love avant-garde retail, architecture, creativity, and chutzpah. Many of the products sold here are only available in this store and in their Tokyo flagship.

CHELSEA MARKET
75 Ninth Ave., at 15th St.

This monster building, once a factory for the National Biscuit Company, takes up an entire city block and serves as a cutiepie renovation turned wholesale/retail space, with installations throughout. It mostly sells food, although occasionally they also have design sample sales there. (Honest.) Great for one-stop shopping or snacking, this place is truly visually exciting.

LADIES MILE

Ladies Mile is in the district some people call Chelsea. I'd say it's on the border and is an area unto itself. You be the judge.

Around the time of the Civil War, when department stores were just beginning to catch on and ladies were allowed to go shopping without chaperones, the great names in New York retail stood in a row along Sixth Avenue (although the original WJ Sloane department store was on Broadway, where ABC Carpet & Home is now) and stretched from 14th Street to 23rd Street. Remember that the world of Manhattan was built from the bottom up, and 14th Street was sort of the edge of civilization at that time, so it would have been an exciting area to be in.

Although some of the retailers who had stores here have stayed in business, most of them moved uptown as trade moved uptown. As a result of this exodus, most of the buildings stood empty and abandoned, especially those on Sixth Avenue. For almost 100 years, Ladies Mile was a wasteland of gorgeous, empty, hulking cast-iron beauties. Then, voilà, they were rediscovered! Most have now been saved and are occupied by famous retailers, while others have been replaced with new structures that house what the trade calls "big box" stores (which you may know by their more common name—superstores).

Most of the tenants here are value-oriented, making this a serious shopping destination. Don't think of this as a neighborhood: It's more of a one-stop spread-your-money-around kind of place for those who want to see how far their buck can go. The area is continuing to develop, not just on Ladies Mile itself, but on the side streets. In addition, more big box retailers from the suburbs are moving in. There's a rumor that **Target** will open here, and **Home Depot Expo** should be open by the time you have this book in hand.

Stores here (as we go to press) include everything from Gap's cheapie line **Old Navy** to **Filene's Basement,** a branch store of the famous Boston off-pricer, to **T.J. Maxx, Bed Bath & Beyond,** and **The Container Store.**

Note: weekends are usually a zoo in these parts. However, most of the stores stay open until 9pm Monday through Saturday nights.

EATS: For lunch, there's **Cafeteria,** a block away in Chelsea (p. 12), which always gets my vote and my stomach. Snacks can be found at the cafe inside **Bed Bath & Beyond.**

TRANSPORTATION: I usually arrive by subway (either the 1 or 9 to Seventh Ave. and 23rd St. or the 1, 2, 3, B, D, F, or V to 14th St.) and walk; I depart via the Sixth Avenue bus, which heads uptown. It's very hard to get a taxi here, especially in rain or snow and on weekends.

There is a doorman at no. 620 who will try to hail a cab for you and will help you with all your packages, but don't count on it being easy, especially if you are laden with bundles.

Alcone
235 W. 19th St., between Seventh and Eighth aves.

This is a beauty-supply store selling theatrical makeup and professional makeup. They have an enormous selection, including brands you may have never seen before. This place is a hangout for celebs and those in the know. See p. 240 for more info.

Barnes & Noble Superstore
675 Sixth Ave., at 21st St.

While there are several Barnes & Noble superstores in Manhattan, this one is special because it helps round out the personality of the neighborhood and is a great pit stop. If your feet are swollen from too much shopping, simply plop down here for a coffee and something to read. I bring Euro visitors here for the discounts and selection; they love it. This store is rumored to be a great pickup place.

Burlington Coat Factory
116 W. 23rd St., at Sixth Ave.

I used to hate this store and was slow to warm to this branch, but it does have the world inside its doors—discounts on clothing for the whole family. You cannot ignore that it's here and that it widens your selection in the area.

The Container Store
629 Sixth Ave., at 22nd St.

This is the new kid on the block for locals, although I know this store from my home in Texas—it's been a suburban landmark for years. This place is known for it's chic storage devices and organizational goods. If you're furnishing a home, trying to better organize a home, or looking for household souvenirs to take to back to Europe, this is the place to start.

Fan Club
22 W. 19th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves.

Looking for something old? The Fan Club has vintage clothing from Gene London, one of New York's most famous theatrical costumers. Most of the donations come from Hollywood. This place has a very casual atmosphere, and you'll need to dig for treasure.

Housing Works Thrift Shop
143 W. 17th St., between Sixth and Seventh aves.

Okay, this is my method: Arrive by subway, go to Loehmann's, eat at Cafeteria, walk east on West 17th Street, and stop at the assorted thrift shops on the way to Sixth Avenue, then turn left onto Sixth Avenue and walk uptown through the Ladies Mile area. Of the thrift shops, Housing Works is my favorite—partly because of the store's uptown clients. Most of the store is devoted to home style, but you'll also find some clothes.

Jams
611 Sixth Ave., at 17th St.

I confess to being a paper, stationery, and office-supply freak, so I love this warehouse-style shop of papers, envelopes, shopping bags, and sometimes gift wrap. Stock isn't regular, so you're bound to find anything and must visit often if you live in these parts. Closeouts are in the rear. ***Note for foreign***

visitors: European paper sizes are different, so don't buy paper for computer printing projects.

OLD NAVY
610 Sixth Ave., at 18th St.

If you like Gap but can't wait for its sales, you may want to try the company's line of clothing at Old Navy, which is 30% less expensive than the regular Gap line. There are Old Navy stores all over the country now, but this one is a beaux-arts beauty in New York's new superstore district. A 1950s-style cafe-cum-diner in the store is another perk.

Don't think Old Navy sells used clothing or an army/navy or surplus kind of look. These are pure Gap basics, mostly of the unisex variety: brightly colored T-shirts, khakis, easy clothing for weekends, and so on.

THE EAST VILLAGE

The area that I call the East Village extends east of Broadway from 14th Street down to Houston Street. This is where independent designers and artists take advantage of the relatively low rents to open storefront shops and galleries. Because of this, there are a number of wonderful and unusual choices for the adventurous shopper.

But first a warning: Shopping in the East Village is not for the faint of heart. You'll have to push past bikers in leather, kids with brightly colored hair and safety pins in their noses, a crush of students from nearby NYU, and panhandlers who compete for sidewalk space with vendors. It's not overly cute, but it is funky. In order to enjoy this area, you must have a spirit of adventure and the desire to find the finds before Barney's or Bergdorf's find them. If you can brave it, you're in for a unique shopping experience.

If you're out with teenagers, a trip down St. Mark's Place (E. 8th St.) will immediately establish you as the coolest

grown-up around and give you a taste of the East Village. If you like what you see, take off and wander and explore the other streets and avenues between Third Avenue and Avenue A, and 14th Street and Houston.

Begin your tour at St. Mark's and Third Avenue, the corner of the busiest block in the East Village, and walk east toward Second Avenue. There is an eclectic mix of stores and restaurants crammed onto this short block. You'll find CD and record stores, bookshops, and clothing shops advertising "Rock Star Clothing." Check out **St. Marks Comics** for a huge selection of comic books and T-shirts. If skin-tight leather pants, microminis, and vinyl clothing are your teen's style—or yours—don't miss **Trash and Vaudeville** for the best in punk gear. If you need to stock up on inexpensive goodies, you'll pass street vendors selling scarves, sunglasses, jewelry, socks, and the like at very cheap prices.

As you cross Second Avenue and continue east, the crush of shops gives way to residences, hipper-than-thou cafes, and cutting-edge boutiques. Take the time to stroll East 9th Street between Third Avenue and Avenue A to check out the newest trends in everything from home furnishings to lingerie. There is a branch of my beloved **Eileen Fisher** here that will have you whispering the secret of this store to your nearest and dearest.

And, yes, I have trolled the **Kmart** (770 Broadway, at 9th St.) here, waiting to be impressed. I like the branch at Penn Station, but this one doesn't seem as good. Win some, lose some. But you didn't come to this part of town for Kmart, now did you?

Most of these stores open late in the morning (around 11am)—this is not an area for early birds.

EATS: I haven't found a fave; let me know what you think.

TRANSPORTATION: The easiest way to take in the whole area is to take the subway (the 6 train) to Astor Place, get out, and prowl. You may come at it from an angle if you take the L train to First Avenue, but you'll walk a ways before you find

the cute stuff. Still, it will be interesting to see how this formerly seedy area is still seedy, but coming up.

Eileen Fisher

314 E. 9th St., between First and Second aves.

You can't read much of this book without noticing that I am wild for Eileen Fisher, a local designer with a handful of shops around town who also sells around the United States. Fisher will certainly make it in the big leagues for her easy-to-wear comfort chic (if she hasn't already). She doesn't have an outlet store in Manhattan (there is one in Secaucus, New Jersey, though), but this strange little store in the East Village has samples, markdowns, and odd little rejects in bins and baskets along with the regular merchandise, so you can just enter and go straight to heaven.

I bought a silk blouse from a bin on the floor for $25 (it was originally priced at $89) and a dress for $62 that was in stores for $139. Even though my dress has a slight defect, the savings makes it invisible to me.

As far as I'm concerned, if you shop nowhere else on East 9th Street, a visit to this store is worth the trip.

Kiehl's

109 Third Ave., between 13th and 14th sts.

It's hard to call Kiehl's a find since it's been around for well over 100 years, is sold in many uptown department stores, and has a cult following that includes just about everyone in New York. But if you are from out of town, you might not know that the original Kiehl's store—home to all sorts of natural beauty lotions and potions—is right here, and has been since 1851.

SoHo

SoHo has become more of a destination than the Village ever was, partly because real estate prices have risen and partly

because European visitors and retailers are comfortable here. So the stakes have risen and the area is all but deluxe . . . and boring, oversaturated as it is with every big name and brand in the world and lacking in the true charm that turned us on in the old days. Plain-old funky doesn't cut it here anymore. Expensive funky is the trend and mainstream funky is following quickly.

Look whose come to roost: **Chanel** (139 Spring St., at Wooster St.) has opened up. (Need I say more?) Everyone from **Louis Vuitton** (114 Greene St., between Prince and Spring sts.) to **Ralph Lauren** (381 W. Broadway, at Broome St.) to **Yves Saint Laurent** (88 Wooster St., at Spring St.) has taken space down here. You'll also find your chicer-than-thou types, such as **Vivienne Westwood** (71 Greene St., between Prince and Spring sts.), **Helmut Lang** (80 Greene St., between Spring and Broome sts.), **Marc Jacobs** (163 Mercer St., between Houston and Prince sts., and 403 and 405 Bleecker St., at W. 11th St.), and **Anna Sui** (113 Greene St., between Prince and Spring sts.). Sure, there are some mass merchandisers already (okay, all of them are here), but the neighborhood hasn't really been ruined . . . yet.

SoHo stands for South of Houston (say "*House*-ton") and is one of the most interesting neighborhoods in New York. Art galleries compete for space with trendy restaurants and boutiques and even trendy grocery stores, and although it's a part of town I once thought most likely to go bust, it has really continued to thrive.

In fact, it even spawned some new sub-neighborhoods—including one at its northern border that I call LoBro (it stands for Lower Broadway); another (as yet nameless) at its eastern border, consisting of the 1½-block stretch of Lafayette Street just below Houston; as well as NoLita, which I am sure will merge into SoHo within the next 5 years since they are adjacent and NoLita is growing fast.

Before those of you in the know start thinking this means SoHo is going to the dogs, or isn't worth your time because you hate designer labels, shuffle over to Lafayette Street, where much of the new excitement in SoHo is coming from. Lots of

little home-furnishings boutiques are opening up here in the cheaper real estate to the east, and SoHo excels in the home-furnishings market. Check out chapter 10, "New York Home," before beginning your explorations of the area.

Beyond all other things, SoHo does stand for diversity in retail styles. To further illustrate the mix of names, styles, and talents that are here, get this: There's **Patagonia** (101 Wooster St., between Prince and Spring sts.); **Laundry by Shelli Segal** (97 Wooster St., between Prince and Spring sts.), not to be confused with **Laundry Industry,** 2 blocks away at 122 Spring St. (at Greene St.); **Todd Oldham** (123 Wooster St., between Prince and Spring sts.); and **Vivienne Tam** (99 Greene St., between Prince and Spring sts.). And, hey, that's just a small sampling so that you get the idea of what's going on down here.

Oh yeah, did I mention that **Armani Casa** (97 Greene St., between Prince and Spring sts.) is in place, **Anne Fontaine** (95 Greene St., between Prince and Spring sts.), the French shirt maker, has arrived, and that foreign big names are everywhere? There's Italian **Dolce & Gabbana** (434 W. Broadway, between Prince and Spring sts.), and Spanish **Zara** (580 Broadway, between Houston and Prince sts.; and 101 Fifth Ave., at 18th St.), in addition to the Americans like **Marc Jacobs** (163 Mercer St., between Houston and Prince sts. and 403 and 405 Bleecker St., at W. 11th St.), **Old Navy** (503 Broadway, between Spring and Broome sts.), and **Coach** (447 W. Broadway, at Prince St.) shoulder to shoulder.

Don't let the scant number of listings below throw you: I could do a book on SoHo alone, since just about every store of note has a branch in these environs, each of them is fun, and many are flagships or showcases. To simplify things, for example, I have not listed **Eileen Fisher** (395 W. Broadway, between Spring and Broome sts.) below since there are many pages of this book devoted to her work, and yet, the Eileen Fisher store in SoHo is three times bigger than any other single Fisher store in Manhattan. See p. 112 for more on Fisher.

Also note that this part of Manhattan is sometimes called The Lipstick District because of the number of beauty and

makeup stores, as well as day spas, within its borders. For descriptions of those, see chapter 9.

You should devote at least a whole day to SoHo, and you should consider your visit an event; a time to wander and to celebrate retail at its best. And do bring your credit cards. If you want very detailed directions and descriptions in SoHo, there's a guide called *Streets of SoHo Map & Guide* that has ads and all sorts of listings; it costs $2.95 at local bookstores. However, stores open at such a rapid pace that you'll probably do better just wandering and enjoying. There are several good hotels right in the area, so you can sharpen your downtown point of view by spending more time in this exciting destination. ***Note:*** I recently came down here on a Sunday afternoon and left screaming—it was a zoo.

Stores tend to open at 11am in these parts.

EATS: Mercer Kitchen (Mercer Hotel, 99 Prince St., at Mercer St.; © **212/966-5454**) offers great fresh-made pizza and boasts a lively brunch scene on Sunday.

TRANSPORTATION: There are many different subway lines that will get you to SoHo. Since I discovered the E train to Spring Street, it has made my life in SoHo so much easier, but you can also take the 6 to Spring Street, or the W or R lines to Prince Street. SoHo is also an easy walk from many other neighborhoods (Chelsea, the Village), so you have no excuse not to visit. Yes, you can even walk here after you stock up on fake fancy pens and sunglasses on Canal Street.

Suzy's Faves

ANTHROPOLOGIE
375 W. Broadway, between Broome and Spring sts.

See the "Lower Fifth Avenue" section, earlier in this chapter.

CATHERINE
468 Broome St., between Greene and Mercer sts.

Her name is Catherine Malandrino and she is the new best friend (of the moment) of every fashion editor in town. In the past few years, her company has grown so much that I even got invited to her sample sale. This is her own store and her own vision; her day job is to lend a helping hand at Diane von Furstenberg. Clothing here is very Gallic, whimsical, and *charmant*. In reverse action, she has recently opened a store in her native France.

5S
98 Prince St., between Mercer and Greene sts.

See p. 241.

Harriet Love
126 Prince St., between Wooster and Greene sts.

This is where you'll find stylish vintage clothing and new retro styles from one of the premier dealers in used or worn fashion, plus droopy chic items; don't miss it. Prices are not inexpensive. When I'm rich, I will waltz into this shop and pay full retail. And I won't even blink. Not once.

Hotel Venus
382 W. Broadway, between Spring and Broome sts.

Silly you! It's not a hotel at all! Patricia Fields has long been one of the most famous names in downtown fashion (you know her as the woman who pulled all the clothes for the TV series *Sex and the City*); this is her SoHo shop, selling affordable funky styles. Think color and disco.

Kate's Paperie
561 Broadway, between Prince and Spring sts.

This SoHo shop sums up all that SoHo was ever meant to be. Kate's sells assorted handmade and art papers by the sheet, various paper products like notebooks, all sorts of paper toys and goodies, stationery, note paper, artsy-fartsy this and that,

rubber stamps, and even papier-mâché. It's sheer heaven. Not cheap, but great fun and very sophisticated. You haven't seen the best of Broadway if you miss Kate's.

Kirna Zabete
96 Greene St., between Prince and Spring sts.

This is the other must-do, hot boutique space with flags flying outside and fashion editors drooling inside. Many of the Euro designer names are unknown in the United States (except perhaps by "fashionistas"), and are difficult to find in uptown sources. The store owners were fashion editors, and the store display is very gallery-esque. The downstairs space sells lotions, potions, and aromatherapy notions. The upstairs is full-service, with everything from clothes to shoes to jewelry and accessories. The store is famous for cool pieces that have style but also have whimsy, and may come from a famous designer such as Balenciaga or from a not-so-well-known member of the Antwerp group.

Morgane Le Fay
67 Wooster St., at Broome St.

I saw the dreamiest chiffon dresses in the world here, including some in white that would make magnificent wedding gowns. I found the prices inconsistent, though—some things that I loved were $180 and others were $630. Ouch. Still, the shop is pure heaven—everything you want a stylish, secret, SoHo source to be. There's also a Madison Avenue shop, by the way, for those of you who are too uptown to call my name. The line is now sold in Bergdorf's as well.

Yaso
62 Grand St., at Wooster St.

Yaso specializes in one-size flowy dresses and charming hats, and also boasts a new line of home goods. The dresses cost close to $200 (half-price sale twice a year!) and are usually made of luxurious fabrics.

CANAL STREET

While you're in SoHo, you might want to wander a few blocks south on Broadway, until you reach the corner of Canal Street, where all the fake designer goods in the world are sold. This area is at the edge of Chinatown and a few blocks from SoHo, so it's pretty convenient.

I don't actually suggest that you buy any of this junk, unless you're looking for joke gifts, but friends from Europe love it here and teenagers seem to think that these items ("name brand" handbags, watches, sunglasses, and more) are must-haves. Trust me, very little down here will fool anyone. This is seedy fun for those who enjoy down-market atmosphere and want to buy fake merchandise. Not for bluebloods.

But wait, before I toss you out on your fake Chanel earrings, let's talk about the Chinese department store **Pearl River** (477 Broadway, between Grand and Broome sts.). I am not that impressed with this resource for everything from silk pajamas to handbags to lamps because I've seen better in San Francisco and much better in Hong Kong. Nonetheless, they are so popular that they now have a brand-new spiffy second store. Go figure.

EATS: Chow down on six dumplings that come with a free egg roll—pick any of the zillions of Chinese restaurants in the area.

TRANSPORTATION: Take subway A, C, or E to Canal Street or subway line 1 or 9 to Canal Street. The lettered trains come out closer to SoHo; the numbers are a block west, closer to the heart of Chinatown.

NOLITA

Although the name of this area is derived from the term "North of Little Italy," the area is also adjacent to SoHo. My guess is that the two will soon merge.

The defining feature of the whole neighborhood, other than the fact that rents are lower than they are in SoHo, and that it's within walking distance of SoHo, is that store owners in this part of town make real personal statements with their stores, much as if their boutiques were art galleries or personal show-and-tell lessons in school. Here, the owner is the star of the show—and often the sole employee. If you're thinking low prices, forget it. If you're thinking cutting-edge chic, you've come to the right place.

The best streets in the area are Elizabeth and Mott in the blocks from Houston to Prince. Around here, the storefronts are very tiny, you can feel the energy of all the creativity in the air, and it's absolutely charming to browse.

EATS: The top lunch spots nearby are in SoHo (p. 138).

TRANSPORTATION: To get here, take the 6 subway to Spring Street.

CALYPSO
280 Mott St., between Houston and Prince sts.

This is one of the most famous of the stores in this area, a gem from retailer-entrepreneur Christiane Celle, who has been so successful with her BoHo hippie chic fashions that she has also opened up a store uptown. In addition, she owns Calypso Bijoux, nearby at 252 Mott St., and two shops in SoHo: Calypso Enfants (426 Broome St., between Crosby and Lafayette sts.) and Calypso in SoHo, next door at 424 Broome St.

HEDRA PRUE
281 Mott St., between Houston and Prince sts.

This store has tons of color. Some items have a Caribbean resort/Mexicana feel, but mostly this is creative stuff for those who love to look like themselves and wouldn't be caught dead in black.

JANET RUSSO
262 Mott St., between Houston and Prince sts.

Nantucket regulars will remember that Russo had one of the most charming boutiques on the island for years. She closed that store and found herself in NoLita, where she sells the same whimsical blend of vintage clothes and home style. No one does the look or captures the spirit of downtown better than Russo.

LANGUAGE
238 Mulberry St., between Prince and Spring sts.

This place has a small selection of many different fashion brands, interesting decor, and enough fun stuff to make you realize that you're not in Kansas anymore. One of the best resources in the area for understanding what it's all about, Alfie.

SEIZE SUR VINGT
243 Elizabeth St., between Houston and Prince sts.

This is a men's store; the name (16/20) refers to an excellent grade in the French school system, which marks up to 20. They do both off-the-rack and custom work; the vibe is sort of preppy rich chic with an edge—not really that downtown at all.

ZERO
225 Mott St., between Prince and Spring sts.

Icon and heroine to the stylish street fashion crowd, Maria Cornejo, with her partner John Richmond, used to have tons of stores. She has now edited herself down to one store where she controls everything and calls it "conceptual fashion." Conceptual fashion means that if you are over 30, you are too old. Worship here and tell people you've been here; it's part of the downtown shtick—you can't talk the talk without visiting this store.

NOHO

This is the single hottest area of town for savvy shoppers of all ages—more fun than SoHo and far more original. NoLita borders on Houston Street, so you have to cross over Houston to get to NoHo (which is shorthand for North of Houston). Lying west of Alphabet City, NoHo almost runs into the East Village. The most developed street is Bond Street, but Lafayette Street is certainly movin' on up. In fact, Lafayette is almost a movie set—the most perfect little retail area that you could dream up; you must do it, even if it means taking a taxi directly to the new **Creed** store (see below) and then exploring the area before wandering into the other downtown districts.

TRANSPORTATION: Take the 6 subway to Broadway-Lafayette (coming downtown) or to Bleecker Street.

Bond 07

7 Bond St., between Broadway and Lafayette St.

While this store takes its name from its address, I'm certain it's also a play on James Bond and 007. This is one of the shrines to alternative retail, fashion, and tight pants. It made the street what it is today.

Creed

9 Bond St., between Broadway and Lafayette St.

Creed is one of the most extraordinary stores in Manhattan and it is certainly the cherry on top of Bond Street. The brand,

Announcement: Lafayette, We Are Here

Lafayette Street runs through NoHo and SoHo, so don't get confused.

which many know because Prince Rainer asked them to create a fragrance especially for Princess Grace as a wedding gift, had been hard to find in the United States before this store opened its doors. Originally an English firm, Creed moved to Paris in the late 1800s and has since been considered a French brand. Not only do they have a slew of specialty scents for men and women, but they also do custom-order clothes.

All 200 scents are in this store, along with information on the celebrities who have worn them. There are also candles and perfumed oils as well as a scent library—and a car that will take VIPs and big spenders home if their packages are too heavy to carry. Creed also has an uptown store now (897 Madison Ave., at 72nd St.).

DARYL K

21 Bond St., between Lafayette St. and Third Ave.

The granddaddy of downtown, and the first tenant to really make Bond Street worth the trip, Daryl K is known to dress celebs and rock stars. Daryl K also wholesales and is sold in a few hip SoHo boutiques.

KATAYONE ADELI

35 Bond St., between Lafayette St. and Third Ave.

One of the newest entries on Bond Street, Adeli has come here to show off her ready-to-wear line, not just the pants for which she has become famous (they grace the tushies of people like Gwyneth Paltrow). The sizes are so tiny they make me itch.

Aaron & Jenny Do Lafayette Street

(SOHO STYLE NEAR NOHO)

POP SHOP

292 Lafayette St., between Prince and Houston sts., SoHo.

Fans of modern art, namely the work of Keith Haring, who is famous for his pop line art and bright colors, will love this

store. They sell reprints of Haring art and T-shirts and buttons decorated with his works. While items here tend to be on the costly side, you can take heart in knowing that 100% of all proceeds taken in by the store go to the Keith Haring Foundation, which supports many worthy causes, including AIDS research and prevention. Now that's what I call shopping with a conscience!

Triple Five Soul
290 Lafayette St., between Prince and Houston sts., SoHo.

Triple Five is one of the coolest clothing lines in stores today. They create T-shirts, jeans, sports coats, messenger bags, jackets, and hoodies, and whatever they make, they always push the boundaries of design in a unique and interesting direction. This store is great because they have a huge selection and a few healthy discounts. Strongly recommended.

The Vice Store
252 Lafayette St., between Prince and Houston sts., SoHo.

The creators of one of New York's finest underground magazines also own this store in SoHo. The free magazine, best known for its hilarious "Do's and Don'ts" section, is always on the cutting edge of each new trend in the city, whether it be in fashion or music, and the store is just the same. Loud indie rock blares as you look through racks of ridiculously priced denim and sneakers. The sale rack at the front of the store can be pretty reasonable and was home to the cheapest Evisu Genes I have ever seen (which were still ridiculously expensive).

TRIBECA

This one stands for the "Triangle Below Canal Street." TriBeCa is a funkier version of SoHo, with less retail and a much less commercial feel. I used to think of TriBeCa as the end of civilization and the point of no return, but it's quickly becoming

more and more gentrified, and is beginning to hop with shops, with Hudson Street as the area's heart. TriBeCa is just a stone's throw from the West Village, so you have no excuse not to visit this area! The TriBeCa Grand Hotel has opened for those who really want to be part of this scene.

Note: This is an area of warehouses and interesting buildings from the cast-iron and brick decades; it's not dangerous but there are plenty of areas that are not gentrified yet and have no commercial enterprise . . . so you can be walking around wondering where the cute is.

EATS: Frankly, I can't find enough serious shopping in TriBeCa to end up eating a meal here, but there are quite a few well-known restaurants in the area, including Japanese hotspot **Nobu** (105 Hudson St., at Franklin St.; ✆ **212/219-0500**) and David Bouley's Austrian-influenced **Danube** (30 Hudson St., at Duane St.; ✆ **212/791-3771**). In addition, there's **Odeon** (145 W. Broadway, at Thomas St.; ✆ **212/233-0507**), one of the restaurants that started the area on its rise to trendiness. The varied French bistro menu allows you to eat little or lots. No lunch is served on weekends. You can also hit **Tribeca Grill** (375 W. Greenwich, at Franklin St.; ✆ **212/941-3900**) owned by Robert DeNiro, which serves a global menu. This place is also closed for lunch on weekends.

TRANSPORTATION: Take the 1 or 9 subway to Franklin Street.

Baker Furniture

129 Hudson St., at Beach St.

This TriBeCa store really signals the arrival of a neighborhood that will become a powerful force in the spending of downtown dollars. Baker Furniture is as mainstream and highbrow as it gets, and only has one other store in Manhattan. There are a variety of furniture styles available; although the line is more known for traditional looks, there are some contemporary California-style pieces on the ground floor.

Issey Miyake
119 Hudson St., at N. Moore St.

Miyake has moved his headquarters and all of his retail from 18th Street and Fifth Avenue to this you-gotta-see-it space, designed in conjunction with Frank Gehry. Offerings include Miyake's APOC line of clothes. The letters stand for "A Piece of Cloth," a very creative line that allows you to make the clothes yourself. Sort of. You'll have to see for yourself.

Lafco
200 Hudson St., at Canal St.

Lafco offers Italian design for the home in a wow setting. Items include furniture, tabletop objects, and everything hot and new. This is also a good place for gifts and small items, so don't think it's only for those in need of a black leather sofa.

THE WEST VILLAGE

Also known as Greenwich Village, or even The Village, this is the area west of Fifth Avenue, from 14th Street to Houston Street, which is actually comprised of several neighborhoods woven into this warren of little colonial streets.

There's teen heaven on West 8th Street (very touristy); there's a gay and lesbian part of town around Christopher and West 4th streets; and there's the funky antiques-store-heavy part of town, which is my main drag, mostly on Bleecker Street, which boasts a nice variety of design, antiques, clothing, gift, and aromatherapy shops. There are a few name brands, such as the newest branch of bath-and-beauty people **Fresh** (388 Bleecker St., at Perry St.), and the antiques shop that many knew as Pierre Deux, which is now called **Les Pierre Antiques** (369 Bleecker St., between Charles and Perry sts.), since both of the Pierres have passed on.

Anyone over the age of 15 who thinks that West 8th Street has good shopping is someone I don't particularly want to shop

with. There are a number of shoe stores selling cheap junk, and some jeans places, and shops where you can have body parts pierced or tattooed, but I mean, really.

Deeper into the West Village, it gets better. I could spend days wandering and shopping the maze of streets with names like Bank, Perry, Charles, Christopher, and West 10th. This is one of the most tranquil neighborhoods in all of New York City.

I suggest spending an afternoon strolling around to become familiar with the neighborhood. But if you only have a limited amount of time, a short walk down Bleecker Street provides a microcosm of West Village shopping. Begin where Sixth Avenue intersects Bleecker Street. As you face downtown, turn right off Sixth onto Bleecker and begin walking. You'll begin in a very commercial area, but once you cross Seventh Avenue, you'll be in strolling and shopping heaven.

Perfectly kept brownstones on calm tree-lined blocks are companions to an eclectic assortment of well-appointed shops selling everything from antiques to clothing to crafts. There are any number of charming restaurants and cafes, should you need a break from shopping. This is a wonderful neighborhood for wandering, getting lost, and discovering your own special places.

EATS: Cornelia Street Cafe (29 Cornelia St., at Bleecker St.) is open all day and evening for meals, snacks, and people-watching, and offers a full schedule of music, theater, poetry readings, and other entertainment.

TRANSPORTATION: Take the 1 or 9 subway to Christopher Street.

CONDOMANIA

351 Bleecker St., between Charles and W. 10th sts.

Loaded with condoms, of course, as well as gifts, party favors, cheap laughs, and more—much more. Maybe not for the under-18 crowd.

FLIGHT 001
96 Greenwich Ave., between Seventh and Eighth aves.

A travel store with all sorts of gadgets and great toys and some travel books; perfect gift items for the person who travels (duh) or the person who has everything.

SOUTH STREET SEAPORT

I count this as a neighborhood, even though it only consists of two malls and a strip of stores. On a clear day, you can shop forever. Built around the old Fulton Street fish market, South Street Seaport is wedged against the water on the east side of lower New York. If you want to believe in urban renewal, take a look here to appreciate what money and talent can do.

There is a maritime museum here, and it's very interesting, especially for kids (make this a family trip). There are also three buildings full of shops—many are branches of famous stores, such as **Ann Taylor, J. Crew, Brookstone,** and **Abercrombie & Fitch,** as well as lots of restaurants and food stands. The Wall Streeters are particularly dense during lunchtime; visitors can take over on weekends. The singles scene is fabulous after work hours.

WALL STREET & THE WORLD TRADE CENTER

Many stores in the World Trade Center area have reopened since the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center. **Century 21** (22 Cortlandt St., between Church St. and Broadway), the city's best off-pricer, is open, in business, and waiting for you . . . reason enough to head downtown. The retailers in lower Manhattan desperately need your business; shop there if you can.

TRANSPORTATION: Take the R or W to Cortlandt Street, the E to World Trade Center, or the 1 or 9 to Rector Street.

LOWER EAST SIDE

Yes, there are a few hip shops on the Lower East Side, but no, it is not the next NoLita. I'll let you know when this area is really ready for prime time. The hip clothing stores started up and then leveled off; now art and home style are moving in. I keep tearing pages from newspapers and guide books, then checking it all out and finding that I'm not knocked out. There's no question that the Lower East Side has changed, that it's no longer the discount area it once was, that few of the old faithful discounters have stayed here. . . . But the next SoHo? Not yet.

Still, it does have some of its own energy and a few of the old favorite stores along with plenty of pickles. Plus, on the last Sunday of every month, the showrooms and studios have open houses from noon until 6pm. For exact information on which artists are participating, call ✆ **646/602-2338** or go to www.elsles.org.

There's also a farmers market down here on the corner of Broome and Ludlow streets each Sunday from 8am to 5pm—no market in dead of winter.

TRANSPORTATION: Take the J, M, or Z subway to Essex Street, or the F or V subway to Lower East Side/2nd Avenue or to Delancey Street.

A.W. KAUFMAN

73 Orchard St., between Broome and Grand sts.

This is one of the few hangers-on from the way things used to be—an old-fashioned discounter from the days before outlets and malls. If you are hooked on fancy schmancy underwear from U.S., Japanese, or European brands, you just might find it significantly discounted here. Harking back to the old-fashioned way: You don't touch the merchandise and you can't try it on. You know what you want, you ask for it, you pay for it. Cash is good. You should live and be well.

Bridge One
100 Orchard St., between Delancey and Broome sts.

Leather for men and women, including the very hottest and newest trends.

DDC Lab
180 Orchard St., between Houston and Stanton sts.

This indie boutique sells the creator's own looks; open till midnight on weekends. Yep, this is where the sneakers cost more than $2,000 a pair.

Fine & Klein
119 Orchard St., between Rivington and Delancey sts.

Okay, let me blurt this out and get it out of the way: While Fine & Klein is one of the most famous stores in the area, and generations of women have been coming here for, well, generations, I find this place singularly boring, and the crowds of people make me crazy. However, there are many name brands and good buys. They have a huge stock of a brand named Sharif, which is one of my favorite brands (it's also sold at Neiman-Marcus). If you are buying at the beginning of the season, then maybe a 20% to 25% discount is worth the trip to you. They will order items for you if they don't have them, and the walls are plastered with ads from magazines and newspapers showing the handbags for sale in this small but well-stocked outlet.

Klein's of Monticello
105 Orchard St., between Delancey and Broome sts.

This is the classiest store on the Lower East Side and one of the best stores in Manhattan. If you are a Barney's shopper, this is your kind of place. How they make do down here beats me. The store is small, chic, and filled with drop-dead gorgeous, high-end, elegant, exquisite, low-key designer clothes that are made for movie stars and high-profile moguls who know how to dress in quiet style. Klein's specialty is European looks, and

its color palette is very sophisticated. You're going to pay several hundred dollars for anything, but you'll never look better in your life.

TG-170
170 Ludlow St., between Houston and Stanton sts.

The hottest new rage for the trendies, this shop showcases up-and-coming clothing and bag designers. Some think it's great, but I am too old for this.

ZAO
175 Orchard St., at Stanton St.

This store possibly gets the most press in all the articles about how neat the Lower East Side is getting to be; minimalist chic at uptown prices.

BROOKLYN

AARON & JENNY'S WILLIAMSBURG FYI

Williamsburg is a big 'burg, so don't get confused about where the prime shopping is: East Williamsburg (which is basically Bushwick) has not had the makeover that Williamsburg proper has, and is not very fabulous. Of Williamsburg proper, there is the north side and the south side. The south side is in the midst of a face-lift, but is still slightly seedy; the north side is the hipster hangout and is home to the chic boutiques.

If you happen to be in the 'burg in the summertime, you will find outdoor merchants selling their wares along Bedford Avenue as if the avenue were a giant yard sale.

EATS: Vera Cruz (195 Bedford Ave., between N. 6th and N. 7th sts.; **© 718/599-7914**) is to Taco Bell what The Royal Gardens are to Busch Gardens. You will find souped-up versions of typical Mexican fare here—burritos, tacos, enchiladas (the best ever), and so on. Other salsas pale in comparison to the

hearty blend here, and the margaritas are incredible. For reasonably-priced Thai, hit **SEA**, 114 N. 6th St., between Wythe Ave. and Berry St.; ✆ **718/384-8850**), which serves Thai fusion cuisine in a fairytale Zen garden setting, accompanied by the ambient music of some of Brooklyn's premiere deejays. The dessert menu includes my all time favorite—flourless chocolate cake with a molten center and ice cream on the side.

TRANSPORTATION: Take the L train, which runs along 14th Street and is easy to find at Union Square, to the first stop in Brooklyn, Bedford Avenue. Walk out of the subway exit towards Bedford (not Driggs) and you will be between North 7th and North 8th streets. Bedford Avenue is where it's all happening right now.

Beacon's Closet

88 N. 11th St., Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

Beacon's Closet is, in my opinion, Williamsburg's finest store for vintage clothing and music. Not only do they have the best and biggest selection in town, they have the most reasonable prices. Beacon's is a huge converted warehouse across the street from the famous Brooklyn Brewery (my all-time favorite microbrewery, home to one of the smoothest pale ales in North America). It is divided into two huge men's and women's sections, with a large section for miscellany. If you're looking for T-shirts, the Closet is the place to go. They have three huge racks of men's tees organized by color and usually available for under $10 (most vintage tees are going for a *minimum* of 20 bucks in New York). Their used music selection is also top-notch.

Beacon's Closet also has a store in Park Slope at 220 Fifth Ave. . . . that's Brooklyn's Fifth Avenue.

The Bedford Ave. Mini Mall

218 Bedford Ave., Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

This is a conglomerate of cool known locally as the Mini Mall. Aside from shopping for books, electronics, and clothes, patrons can check their e-mail at the grungy Internet Garage,

take a yoga class, or sip some java at one of New York's most fun sidewalk cafes.

For female shoppers, two standouts are **Otte** (which also has a store in the West Village at 121 Greenwich Ave.) and the **Mini Mini-Market** (not a typo, folks, let's call it the MMM hereafter). Otte is pretty expensive, but it's a great place to browse and perhaps to get some ideas of what's on the cutting edge of women's fashion. The MMM is one of the coolest, kitschiest clothing shops for blocks. Most of their stock is girl-geared, but they also have a modest selection of men's attire. Aside from great clothes, they have a fabulous stock of hats and handbags, and a few sneakers. The MMM also carries cool beauty products and throwback toys.

Two other notables inside the mall are the local wine shop and the local cheese shop, both owned and operated by some of the friendliest people in the 'burg, quite willing to give a free sample to all who inquire.

Brooklyn Industries

162 Bedford Ave., Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

This is one of Williamsburg's most original stores. They have a large collection of some of the biggest indie brands, and they also have their own in-house designer, who creates T-shirts, hoodies, and hats. There's great '70s-looking underwear and pants for the ladies, and a nice sale section in the back, including a rack labeled "Ten-Buck-Tees," where you can usually find some great designs for cheaper than you're likely to see anywhere else. This is also the place to buy the ubiquitous T-shirts and hoodies with BROOKLYN sewn or printed across them.

BI also has a store in Park Slope, Brooklyn at 152 Fifth Ave., and is opening one in SoHo at 286 Lafayette St.

Grandma's (Best) Kept Secret

176 Bedford Ave., Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

The Salvation Army on Bedford Avenue (directly across from the subway) was alternately titled "Grandma's Kept Secret"

until this year, when the owners realized their odd word omission and awkwardly added a carat (^) and the word "best" in small letters to their awning. Perhaps an effort to amend their original assertion of a hidden grandma, or of grandma as a kept woman? Regardless, this store is home to the absolute cheapest collection of vintage clothes that you will find in the whole 'burg, and a sizable selection of cheap furniture. While the selection varies greatly, good finds are usually hidden . . . just like grandma once was . . . we think.

Metaphors/Pilgrim (Home)
195 and 202 Bedford Ave., respectively, Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

Rose Knightly is the owner of these two great shops, Pilgrim (Home) and Metaphors. Both stores are probably boyfriend-borers but have such great stuff that you can let your boyfriend loose in the Mini-Mall (described earlier in this section) and come back for him when you're ready.

Pilgrim (Home) is a little bit expensive, but they have some of the cutest housewares in town: kitschy drinking glasses and bathmats, olive-oil bottles, and the largest variety of "alternative" cutting boards that we've ever come across.

Metaphors is a gift shop that sells items geared toward the progressive: yoga manuals, books on philosophy, and meditation crystals, to name a few. They also have women's clothing and lingerie, and while most of it is absolutely darling, it's also very pricey.

DUMBO

This is another of New York's famous acronyms, standing for "Down Under Manhattan Bridge Overpass." This part of Brooklyn, obviously just at the edge of the borough (since it's under the bridge overpass), used to be rather seedy. Now it's less seedy, and the low rents have attracted all sorts of galleries and eats, though not a lot of browse-and-shop kinds of places. Yet.

Chapter Eight

NEW YORK RESOURCES A TO Z

ACCESSORIES

Oh boy. I could write a whole book just on the accessories available in New York. We'll start with a few orders of business:

- All department stores have accessories departments; most boutiques also sell them. Designer boutiques make their cash flow on fragrance and accessories since few people can afford the clothes. Can't afford the dress? Never mind, buy the scarf.
- For our purposes, accessories include jewelry and fake jewelry (shops listed below).
- Shoes and bags have their own sections, later in this chapter.
- There has been a recent trend of jewelry stores selling their own lines of handbags—Bulgari, Tiffany, and Lalique are all on the bandwagon.
- The stuff sold on the streets is not only fake, but may finance terrorists. You never know.

Fun Sources

Bokhee
1077 Third Ave., at 63rd St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

This is New York Correspondent Paul Baumrind's find—he says the one-of-a-kind evening bags are seriously impressive.

Le Sportsac
1065 Madison Ave., at 81st St. (Subway: 4, 5, or 6 to 86th St.).

We're talking about carry-alls, totes, and handbags, all great for travel. Confession: I tend to buy this brand at off-pricers. However, the range sold in the Madison Avenue shop is always ahead of what they get at discount shops and off-pricers, and some of it is rather chic. You can't beat the prices.

Mariko
998 Madison Ave., at 77th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

Fashion alert! This is one of my best secret finds. I have bought the best earrings of my life here. Many swoon for these copies of the most prestigious names in jewelry. Yep, copies. Fancy copies. There are silk flowers, some handbags (mostly for evening), and assorted small fashion items, but the jewelry is the way to go. Prices are not low, but the work is sublime . . . and dare I say it, somewhat funky. In other words, not copies of your average big names—instead, this place creates copies of Vedura, Elizabeth Gage, and names like that. Very sophisticated.

Omar
Madison Ave., at 66th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St.).

Omar has no real address because he is a street vendor. He sells handbags, ties, scarves, and all sorts of fun things—a cut above the average street merchant. Cellphone: **✆ 917/361-7576.**

RENE
1255 Madison Ave., at 93rd St. (Subway: 6 to 96th St.).
1007 Madison Ave., at 78th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

The lower Madison Avenue branch of this store is across the street from Mariko (listed earlier), so you can kill two birds with one faux diamond. Like Mariko's stock, the items here are very sophisticated and chic, though Rene's stuff is not as flashy as Mariko's. There are handbags and belts as well as jewelry items. You'll get good purchases for your money here.

VBH
940 Madison Ave., between 74th and 75th sts. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

This place looks like an art gallery or a branch of the San Francisco retail store Gump's—everything in the store is for sale, although the specialty is leather goods. Everything is sleek and expensive and worthy of a movie set.

ZITOMER
969-965 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

The main Zitomer store is a pharmacy/drugstore (at least on the ground floor), but the next-door store (they do not connect) is filled with accessories, even pet accessories. The look is sort of Euro-glitter. The hair accessories are excellent, although sometimes pricey.

ACTIVE SPORTSWEAR & SPORTS GEAR

I refuse to list every major active sportswear chain in Manhattan. However, there are some specialty retailers that are fit for a (sporty) king.

If you need a quick sports purchase or must have your tennis racket restrung, there's a branch of the chain **Sports Authority** at 57 W. 57th St. (between Fifth and Sixth aves.). This

superstore is incredibly useful if you want to make a quick hit for equipment or clothing needs. Also note that the various athletic-shoe companies have snazzy shops, such as **NikeTown.**

Eastern Mountain Sports

591 Broadway, at Houston St. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.); 20 W. 61st St., between Broadway and Columbus Ave. (Subway: 1, 9, A, B, C, D, or E to 59th St./Columbus Circle).

Part of a large chain of active outfitters, EMS has one of its largest stores on the edge of NoHo. They bill themselves as "The Outdoor Specialists," and this is the place to go for both price and selection. You can get all your skiwear, camping equipment, fishing gear, and hiking supplies at this well-stocked, one-stop sporting-goods mart.

Orvis

522 Fifth Ave., at 44th St. (Subway: B, D, F, V, S, or 7 to 42nd St./5th Ave.).

If L.L. Bean came to Manhattan, he would probably check into Orvis. Orvis is famous for its fishing supplies, and also sells gifts for fishers (such as fishy ties and pillows). The store also offers fishing chic clothes that are rather suitable for weekending in the country or for visiting Balmoral, although the fashion pales when compared to L.L. Bean.

Paragon

867 Broadway, at 18th St. (Subway: W or R to 23rd St.).

One night, a wacky friend kidnapped me to take me to his favorite store in New York. Was it Barney's? No way. Macy's? Guess again. It was Paragon, a sporting-goods supermarket not far from Union Square and part of the new Lower Broadway hoopla. This is the kind of store you whirl through with a shopping basket—it truly has everything you can imagine.

PATAGONIA
426 Columbus Ave., at 81st St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 79th St.).

Though technical products for specific sports make up most of the inventory here, this status brand also sells active outdoor clothing for men, women, and kids.

BEAUTY & BEYOND

See chapter 9 for beauty resources.

BIG NAMES IN FASHION

Manhattan is packed with showcase shops that feature the creations of the world's top designers. For those who shop in these stores, the names, the faces, the looks, and the prices stay more or less the same. Therefore, I only list addresses for these sources in this section.

Please note that many of these designers have recently opened or are in the process of opening stores in SoHo. Also note that because of the amount of available real estate, the big names have been moving around like mad. Since the last edition of this book, almost a dozen shops moved, and many stores that haven't moved have expanded or re-created themselves. Thought you knew everything about Ferragamo? Be sure to check out the way the shop has been redone.

The quickest way to see a lot of brand names is always at a department store.

American Big Names

Some of the big names listed below are described elsewhere in the book; others are such ubiquitous brands that no explanation is needed.

Anna Sui
113 Greene St., at Prince St. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.).

Calvin Klein
654 Madison Ave., at 60th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

Dana Buchman
65 E. 57th St., at Park Ave. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

Diane Von Furstenberg
385 W. 12th St., at Washington St. (Subway: A, C, or E to 14th St. or L to 8th Ave.).

Donna Karan
819 Madison Ave., at 68th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./ Hunter College).

Donna Karan New York (DKNY)
655 Madison Ave., at 60th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.); 420 W. Broadway, at Spring St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to Houston St.).

Geoffrey Beene
37 W. 57th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves., upstairs (Subway: F to 57th St.).

Levi Strauss
750 Lexington Ave., at 60th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

Marc Jacobs
163 Mercer St., between Houston and Prince sts. (Subway: W or R to Prince St.).

NikeTown
2 E. 57th St., near Fifth Ave. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

RALPH LAUREN
867 Madison Ave., at 72nd St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College); 381 W. Broadway, at Broome St. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.).

ST. JOHN
665 Fifth Ave., at 53rd St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave.).

English, European & Japanese Big Names

You will probably recognize most of the names on this who's-who-of-international-fashion list.

AKRIS
835 Madison Ave., at 69th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

ALEXANDER MCQUEEN
417 W. 14th St., at Ninth Ave. (Subway: A, C, or E to 14th St. or L to 8th Ave.).

ARMANI CASA (HOME STORE)
97 Greene St., between Prince and Spring sts. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.).

ARMANI EXCHANGE A/X
645 Fifth Ave., at 54th St. (Subway: E, V, N, R, or W to 5th Ave.); 568 Broadway, at Prince St. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.); 129 Fifth Ave., at 20th St. (Subway: R or W to 23rd St.); Time Warner Center (Subway: A, B, C, D, E, 1, or 9 to 59th St./Columbus Circle).

BALENCIAGA
550 W. 29th St., between Tenth and Eleventh aves. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 28th St.).

BALLY OF SWITZERLAND
628 Madison Ave., at 59th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

Bottega Veneta
635 Madison Ave., between 59th and 60th sts. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave.).

Burberry
9 E. 57th St., between Fifth and Madison aves. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave.); 131 Spring St., at Greene St. (Subway: 6 to Spring St.).

Cèline
667 Madison Ave., at 61st St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

Chanel
15 E. 57th St., between Fifth and Madison aves. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave.); 139 Spring St., at Wooster St. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.).

Chloe
850 Madison Ave., at 70th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./ Hunter College).

Christian Dior
19 E. 57th St., between Fifth and Madison aves. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave.).

Comme des Garcons
520 W. 22nd St., at Tenth Ave. (Subway: C or E to 14th St.).

Dolce & Gabbana (D&G)
434 W. Broadway, between Prince and Spring sts. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.).

Emanuel Ungaro
792 Madison Ave., at 67th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./ Hunter College).

Emilio Pucci
24 E. 64th St., between Fifth and Madison aves. (Subway: F to Lexington Ave./63rd St.).

EMPORIO ARMANI
110 Fifth Ave., at 16th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, Q, W, or L to Union Sq.); 601 Madison Ave., at 58th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.); 410 W. Broadway, at Spring St. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.).

ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA
743 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave.).

ESCADA
715 Fifth Ave., at 55th St. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave.).

ETRO
720 Madison Ave., at 64th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./ Hunter College).

FENDI
720 Fifth Ave., at 56th St. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave.).

FOGAL
680 Madison Ave., at 61st St. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave.).

GIANFRANCO FERRE
845 Madison Ave., at 70th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./ Hunter College).

GIANNI VERSACE
647 Fifth Ave., at 51st St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave.).

GIORGIO ARMANI/ARMANI COUTURE
754 Madison Ave., at 65th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./ Hunter College).

GUCCI
685 Fifth Ave., at 54th St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave.); 840 Madison Ave., at 69th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./ Hunter College).

Hermès
691 Madison Ave., at 62nd St. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave.).

Issey Miyake
992 Madison Ave., at 77th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.); 119 Hudson St., at N. Moore St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to Franklin St.); 128 Wooster St., at Prince St. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.).

Jaeger
818 Madison Ave., at 68th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./ Hunter College).

Kenzo
80 Wooster St., at Spring St. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.).

Krizia
769 Madison Ave., at 66th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./ Hunter College).

La Perla
777 Madison Ave., at 67th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./ Hunter College).

Laura Ashley
398 Columbus Ave., at 79th St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 79th St.).

Laura Biagiotti
4 W. 57th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

Les Copains
801 Madison Ave., at 67th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./ Hunter College).

Louis Vuitton
1 E. 57th St., at Fifth Ave. (Subway: F to 57th St.); 116 Greene St., between Prince and Spring sts. (Subway: W or R to Prince St.).

MARC JACOBS
403 Bleecker St., at 11th St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to Christopher St.); 163 Mercer St., between Houston and Prince sts. (Subway: W or R to Prince St.).

MAX MARA
813 Madison Ave., at 68th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College); 450 W. Broadway, at Prince St. (Subway: W or R to Prince St.).

MISSONI
1009 Madison Ave., at 79th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

MONT BLANC
23 E. 57th St., between Fifth and Madison aves. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

NICOLE FARHI
10 E. 60th St., between Fifth and Madison aves. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave.).

PRADA
45 E. 57th St., between Park and Madison aves. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.); 28 E. 70th St., between Park and Madison aves. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College); 724 Fifth Ave., at 56th St. (Subway: F to 57th St.); 116 Wooster St., between Prince and Spring sts. (Subway: W or R to Prince St.).

SALVATORE FERRAGAMO
665 Fifth Ave., at 54th St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave.); 124 Spring St., at Greene St. (Subway: 6 to Spring St.).

SONIA RYKIEL
849 Madison Ave., at 70th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

STELLA MCCARTNEY
429 W. 14th St., at Tenth Ave. (Subway: A, C, or E to 14th St. or L to 8th Ave.

VALENTINO
823 Madison Ave., at 68th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

YOHJI YAMAMOTO
103 Grand St., at Mercer St. (Subway: A, C, or E to Canal St.).

YVES SAINT LAURENT
855 Madison Ave., at 71st St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College); 88 Wooster St., between Spring and Broome sts. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.).

BOOKS

In addition to the choices below, there are the big chains, **Barnes & Noble,** with a popular outlet opposite Union Square, 33 E. 17th St. (✆ **212/253-0810**; www.bn.com); and **Borders,** which has four stores in Manhattan including one in the Time Warner Center, 10 Columbus Circle (✆ **212/823-9775**; www.bordersstores.com).

BAUMAN RARE BOOKS
535 Madison Ave., between 54th and 55th sts. (Subway: 6 to 51st St.).

Dealing strictly in highly prized volumes with topics ranging from philosophy and science to children's classics, Bauman's is one of the foremost resources for serious collectors willing to spend big money for pristine first editions. Titles include everything from Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1669) to Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1960) signed by the author.

BOOKS OF WONDER
16 W. 18th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves. (Subway: L, N, R, 4, 5, or 6 to 14th St./Union Sq.).

You don't have to be a kid to fall in love with this charming bookstore, which served as the model for Meg Ryan's shop in *You've Got Mail.* (Meg even worked here for a spell to train for the role.) Kids will love BOW's story readings; call or check the website (www.booksofwonder.net) for the latest schedule.

Rizzoli
31 W. 57th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves. (Subway: N or R to Fifth Ave.)

This clubby Italian bookstore is the classiest—and most relaxing—spot in town to browse for visual art and design books, plus quality fiction, gourmet cookbooks, and other upscale reading. There's a decent selection of foreign-language, music, and dance titles as well.

The Strand
828 Broadway, at 12th St. (Subway: L, N, R, 4, 5, or 6 to 14th St./Union Sq.)

Something of a New York legend, The Strand is worth a visit for its staggering "eight miles of books" as well as its extensive inventory of review copies and bargain titles at up to 85% off list price. It's unquestionably the city's best book deal—there's almost nothing marked at list price—and the selection is phenomenal in all categories (there's even a rare book department on the third floor). Still, you'll work for it: The narrow aisles mean you're always getting bumped; the books are only roughly alphabetized; and there's no air-conditioning. Nevertheless, it's a used-book-lover's paradise.

BRIDAL

All department stores have bridal departments, though many young women today prefer alternative retail—buying wholesale from the bridal suppliers in the garment district, going to the Filene's Basement Bridal Sale, checking out the Vera Wang

once-a-year sale (usually in Feb), and so on. See p. 326 for the phone numbers for information on these sale events.

B&J Fabrics
525 Seventh Ave., at 38th St. (Subway: 1, 2, 3, 9, N, R, Q, or W to 42nd St./Times Sq.).

See p. 187 for the listing for this store. The fabric for Carolyn Besette Kennedy's wedding gown came from B&J.

Kleinfeld's of Brooklyn
8202 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St., Brooklyn (Subway: R to 86th St.).

Many New York brides make the trek here for the selection. Sometimes there are price breaks. The hours are strange, so call ahead and/or make an appointment: **✆ 718/765-8500.** See p. 313 for more details.

Michael's
1041 Madison Ave., at 82nd St. (Subway: 4, 5, or 6 to 86th St.).

This famous resale shop sells used wedding gowns in addition to a range of other clothing. See p. 329 for full listing.

Vera Wang
991 Madison Ave., at 77th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

America's most famous name in fancy-schmancy, off-the-rack bridal couture. There's a warehouse sale in a downtown hotel once a year, usually in February (look in *New York* magazine for the exact date).

CASHMERE

Cashmere is difficult to buy at discount because there are so many tricks to the quality—you may pay a low price but get

exactly what you paid for. You'll do better to pay more and get the best possible quality. If you take care of your cashmeres, they will last you a lifetime—or longer. I still wear a sweater of my mother's that is easily 50 years old.

Keep in mind that Italian cashmere is the best, followed by Scottish. Don't buy Chinese cashmere unless you like cheap thrills. Note that the big English brands usually sell Scottish cashmere.

The thought that anyone would walk into a cashmere store and pay regular retail is a joke to me. I'd buy during a sale period of course! Or I'd use my regular discount sources, be they off-pricers or discounters. But pay full price? Eeeeek! When is the best time to buy cashmere, my dear? July, of course. That's when it's on sale and mere mortals get hot flashes when they think of it.

The Big Names

A crop of cashmere specialty stores (mostly Italian) has opened on Madison Avenue. In no way does the $99 cashmere special at Lord & Taylor compare to the cashmere that's sold in these stores. Some of these places sell more than cashmere—in fact, they have to, just to stay in business. I once bought my husband a bathing suit at Malo! Since the big-name makers sell different versions of the same thing, I merely list them.

BERK
781 Madison Ave., at 66th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

CASHMERES ETC.
854 Madison Ave., at 70th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

MALO
814 Madison Ave., at 68th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

MANRICO
804 Madison Ave., at 67th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

N. PEAL
5 W. 56th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

TSE
827 Madison Ave., at 69th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

Discounters

ALBERENE CASHMERE
435 Fifth Ave., at 39th St., 3rd floor (Subway: B, D, F, V, S, or 7 to 42nd St./5th Ave., or 4, 5, 6, 7, or S to 42nd St./Grand Central).

This place is similar to Best of Scotland (see below). I don't happen to think that a ruffled cashmere cape at $600 is a bargain, even though I know that these capes sell for $900 to $1,000 and more at name stores. I'm cheap. For $600, I could fly to Scotland; but then I'd still have to rent a car and drive to Hawick and get to the factories and pay for the shawl. Of course, Alberene offers free shipping. . . . Hmmm . . . decisions, decisions. Call ✆ **800/843-9078** if you want to comparison-shop for prices or make an order.

BEST OF SCOTLAND
581 Fifth Ave., at 47th St., 6th floor (Subway: B, D, F, or V to Rockefeller Center).

The words "cashmere" and "discount" do not really go hand in hand. Prices are not low and there is little for less than $100, but if you like quality cashmere and those shawls with the little ruffles, this is your chance to buy at a slightly better price.

CHIC & SIMPLE CLOTHING

There is a trend in New York for women with money and style to avoid the big stores and concentrate on a single source or two that can supply simple yet perfect style and maximum service. The type of clothing that these women buy is classically chic—always refined, simple, elegant, and practical. Much of it is in the **Armani** style, but streamlined, and the palette is almost always monochromatic. These items are not inexpensive.

I've listed **Eileen Fisher** in this text about five million times; she offers the baggy and less expensive version of this look (p. 26). If you are an Eileen Fisher fan, the outlet store in Secaucus is worth the drive (p. 319).

ANNE FONTAINE

687 Madison Ave., at 61st St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.); 610 Fifth Ave., at Rockefeller Center (Subway: B, D, F, or V to Rockefeller Center); 93 Greene St., between Prince and Spring sts. (Subway: E to Spring St.).

This French chain now has several shops in Manhattan selling the shirts that Fontaine is famous for. She began by selling only white shirts and blouses but now also does black—everything from sporty to dressy.

CP SHADES

154 Spring St., between W. Broadway and Wooster St. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.).

I consider this line the poor gal's Eileen Fisher and a friend of anyone who likes the Armani palette of soft pastel. You'll find droopy clothes with elastic waists, big dresses, and comfortable clothing in tones that are nice but neutral. I am personally a big CP Shades fan. I especially go nuts when they have sales. The look is a little too bohemian for normal workdays in Manhattan, but it's great for weekends or suburbia. This is one of those lines that works for teens as well as their moms

and grandmothers . . . all ages, all sizes . . . all pocketbooks. Who could want more?

Dosa
107 Thompson St., between Prince and Spring sts. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.).

I discovered this line at Bergdorf's, but this is the designer's own shop, showing off her clothes solo so that they can get the icon status they deserve. Dosa sells wrinkly, crinkly silks in hand-dyed yummy colors. Items can be layered or mixed and matched. This is a look, but the pieces are such basics that you can blend them with anything. The only problem is that the sizes aren't too big.

Shen
1005 Madison Ave., at 77th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

This is the place for sublime, body-skimming, simple elegance in gorgeous fabrics. I saw a fluttery, lightly layered, froth-of-chiffon sleeveless tank top that was the whisper of everything I always wanted to be. It was almost $200, but this is where you put your money when elegance is all you believe in. Pieces are usually in solid colors. If I could afford it, I'd shop nowhere else.

CHILDREN

Shopping for kids in Manhattan is a bit of a Catch-22: You have to be crazy to spend time in New York shopping for kids, but you'd be crazy not to think about it because there are so many great places. So think carefully. The truth is that you can do better in suburban discounters and off-pricers, and through mail-order catalogs if price or the combination of price and acceptable style are your main concerns. If you want to splurge, that's another story. Welcome to a city where people spend $200 for a pair of party shoes for their kids.

I am assuming that you have chains such as **GapKids** and **BabyGap** in your neck of the woods; if not, they are great fun, and sale prices are moderate. Should you be able to hit the outlet malls, please note that **Carter's** has outlets in Woodbury Common as well as the New Jersey malls; these outlets sell not only the Carter's line but also the **Baby Dior** line. See chapter 11 for more on outlet stores. In town, the source for discounted kids' everything is **Burlington Coat Factory** in Ladies Mile.

A few thoughts to help you:

- All the big department stores have excellent children's departments.
- The Lower East Side is good for bulk in layette at a 20% discount.
- Madison Avenue is dotted with fine and funky boutiques that sell unusual specialty items that no one has ever seen before (read: very expensive). Check out places like **Au Chat Botte** (1192 Madison Ave., at 88th St.) for the cat's meow in this genre.
- The area of upper Madison Avenue from 86th to 96th streets houses many private schools and is therefore jammed with boutiques catering to young ones—many are branches of international big names such as **Bonpoint, Jacadi,** or **Oilily.** A few are just simple little local resources such as **Greenstones et Cie** or **Penny Whistle** (for toys).
- There are some **Toys "R" Us** branches dotted all over town. Know that Toys "R" Us has closed out their clothing divisions.
- Some of the big names, especially in what I call conservative fashion, make kids clothes—check out **Brooks Brothers** and **Talbots.** Even **Ralph Lauren** now has a toddler line.
- **Daffy's,** the discounter, sells kids clothes at all its locations; see p. 112.

Enchanted Forest

85 Mercer St., between Broome and Spring sts. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.).

This SoHo spot for kids is filled with trolls and make-believe and magic in an honest-to-goodness forest populated by many handcrafted and one-of-a-kind items. Prices range from 10¢ to $2,000. No clothes.

Greenstones et Cie

442 Columbus Ave., at 81st St. (Subway: A, B, C, or D to 81st St.).

One of the most famous and longtime residents of the reborn Upper West Side, Greenstones et Cie, thankfully, is not one of those kiddie stores that's as big as a closet with prices as high as a condo. I mean, prices aren't low, but the range of looks is wide, from Chanel-style suits for your young miss to leather bomber jackets. There are almost a hundred different European lines sold here, as well as standard American faves such as OshKosh.

Now on upper Madison as well, under the name Greenstones Too (1184 Madison Ave., at 86th St.; Subway: 4, 5, or 6 to 86th St.).

Magic Windows

1186 Madison Ave., at 87th St. (Subway: 4, 5, or 6 to 86th St.).

Expanded now to include the teenage debutante and party set, this store mostly features dress-up clothes, because the clients all wear uniforms to school. Doesn't everyone?

Oilily

870 Madison Ave., at 71st St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./ Hunter College).

This is a Dutch chain with stores all over the world and prices that make my heart break. I wait for their sales, when I splurge for my niece Julia, who loves bright colors, happy splashy designs, mixed patterns, and all the celebration a garment can take. Best news: They now have an outlet store at Woodbury Common (p. 319).

OshKosh B'Gosh
586 Fifth Ave., at 48th St. (Subway: B, D, F, or V to Rockefeller Center).

This maker of clothing for tots has been popular in the United States for a long time, and almost has a cult status in Continental Europe. The brand opened a store in Paris and has conquered Fifth Avenue with a good-size store crammed with clothes for boys and girls. I find the clothes expensive and I prefer to buy them used, but Europeans will go nuts for the prices here because this line is so pricey overseas that the store here seems like a bargain basement.

Penny Whistle
448 Columbus Ave., at 82nd St. (Subway: A, B, C, or D to 81st St.); 1283 Madison Ave., at 91st St. (Subway: 4, 5, or 6 to 86th St.).

This place has a nice selection of European and American toys and a well-stocked area of Halloween goods. The store has high prices on some items, then surprises you by being reasonable on others: British toy knights are $1 and $3 each. There are many run-in-and-buy-a-silly-something kinds of gifts and child-pleasers if you are out with your tots and need a sudden bribe.

Zitomer
969 Madison Ave., at 76th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

Take the elevator from the pharmacy part of this store and go up to little-girl dreamland. Some child actors have admitted to Joan Rivers that their Oscar gowns come from Zitomer.

DEPARTMENT & SPECIALTY STORES

Things to know:

- Delivery service is available at all stores, but you will be charged for it. Few stores have private delivery service anymore; usually they use UPS, except for large pieces of furniture.
- All stores will provide free, simple gift-wrapping services. Elaborate wrapping costs extra. Usually you can get a free shopping bag with handles by asking at a customer desk or wrap desk, although stores also have machines that sell outsize shopping bags.
- All stores have buying services, personal shoppers, and translators, as well as clean bathrooms. Many have checkrooms for your coats and packages. Most now have spas. Now you really can shop till you drop.
- A variety of credit cards are taken at all stores; some are still pushing their house credit cards and may even offer a 10% discount for purchases made when you sign up for the card. International customers are accepted.

Barney's
660 Madison Ave., at 60th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

Barney's Co-op
236 W. 18th St., between Seventh and Eighth aves. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 18th St.); 116 Wooster St., at Prince St. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.).

Uptown Barney's is a legend. Only visitors and uptown girls shop here, as this store is special beyond special. Barney's has re-created itself as times have changed, and is one of the most exciting retail properties in Manhattan. Indeed, no shopping trip to New York is complete without a visit to this store. Whether you buy anything or not is meaningless—you must see and touch and feel.

The store is actually two different eight-story stores that connect on the street level. The amount of store for viewing (and shopping), combined with the power of the displays and fixtures, is so staggering that you won't want to miss one square inch.

The most exciting part (to me) is Chelsea Passage, the home-design department. I'm also keen on the fragrance division, which has a number of unique bath products, European favorites that I don't see elsewhere, and cult makeup brands.

Okay, about prices. While a lot of the merchandise is very expensive, a lot of it is not. It all looks expensive, but there are plenty of items, especially accessories, that are moderately priced and possibly even better priced than in other big-name shops.

The Madison Avenue store is also open 7 days a week and stays open until 9pm; hours that help to make midtown browsing a new evening sport.

Now then, here's the part you might not know: Barney's has converted its Chelsea warehouse space into a retail store called Barney's Co-op, which is the division of the store that sells young, trendy, and really exciting stuff. This is the place for the company's famed February and July warehouse sales. The Chelsea store is very original in feel and stock—fixtures in the store are outrageous and creative and artistic (to match the clothes, of course) and the space is meant to attract the Jeffrey (p. 184) crowd and everyone else with style and moola. Taxi, please! Note that the Chelsea store was so successful that they added on a SoHo branch of the Co-op, at 116 Wooster St. (between Prince and Spring sts.).

Bergdorf Goodman (& Bergdorf Goodman Men)

754 Fifth Ave., at 58th St. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

Bergdorf's has had a face-lift, and dramatic things have been done to this store to bring back some of its lost energy. If you haven't been here for a while, do stop in. And drop down under to the lower-level beauty floor.

My favorite part of the store is still the seventh floor—a gift department and Kentshire Antiques; Christmas is a delight. Every day is a delight, actually. Hours are Monday through Saturday 10am to 7pm; Thursday evening until 8pm.

Bloomingdale's

1000 Third Ave., at 59th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

A trip to Bloomie's is a trip to the moon on gossamer wings. You start off filled with energy and excitement, and you love everything you see, but as you wear out, you wear down, and suddenly you realize you're lost, the store is difficult to shop, and you can't remember all the departments. *C'est le Bloomie's.* Still, it's one of the best department stores in the world.

You must know the territory or go with someone who does if you like to shop efficiently. Otherwise, just take small doses, always remembering that no one does it like Bloomingdale's, and that's why the store has become a legend in its own time.

I cannot tell you that Bloomingdale's lives up to the hype, but I can tell you that for massive amounts of merchandise and for selection, this store is possibly the best in town. Plus, the designer boutiques are excellent, and second markdowns can make you very happy. ***Some tips:*** The store has many entrances. You can enter on Lexington Avenue, even though the official street address is Third Avenue. Also, there is a subway (N, R, W, 4, 5, and 6 lines) under Bloomie's, so you can coordinate your shopping tours properly.

A smaller branch of the store has opened in SoHo, at 504 Broadway, between Spring and Broome sts. (Subway: E to Spring St.).

Henri Bendel

712 Fifth Ave., at 56th St. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

From a merchandise point of view, this store has changed dramatically recently and is a little less exclusive and less chic than it was. Visually, the store is still fun to stare at and shop, although you may not really buy much.

Prices vary from outrageous to quite moderate. The makeup department is good—Bobbi Brown and MAC cosmetics as well

as Chanel and a few big brands, in addition to their famous brown-and-white-striped logo travel cases.

Here's one of the best parts—this store does zillions of parties and promotional events, many of which are after hours. You usually get a goody-bag when you attend; at the last event I went to, the goody-bag even had a $25 gift certificate in it for any purchase at Bendel's. These events are very much worth attending. Get on the mailing list and party like crazy.

Jeffrey

449 W. 14th St., between Ninth and Tenth aves. (Subway: A, C, or E to 14th St. or L to 8th Ave.).

I'll spare comparisons to Barney's or even Colette in Paris. Jeffrey has done some very interesting things. Architecturally, this is a temple of moderne set in contrast to the grunginess of the surrounding district. There is a live DJ most of the time, and the salespeople have been poached from the best stores in New York and are fabulous beyond belief.

Jeffrey carries shoes, accessories, some cosmetics, menswear, and several types of women's clothing for just about any look. Although some of the names are also sold uptown, Jeffrey's stock is in keeping with his taste, and I find his taste much more exciting than uptown sensibilities—he tends to be less safe and take more risks.

This is one of the most exciting stores in New York if you know who you are. If you're just browsing and don't have a finely tuned understanding of the ironies of glamour, the store isn't worth the time it takes to get downtown. Let's pray there's enough people who "get it" to keep this store thriving.

Lord & Taylor

424 Fifth Ave., at 38th St. (Subway: B, D, F, V, or 7 to 42nd St./5th Ave., or 4, 5, 6, 7, or S to 42nd St./Grand Central).

Lord & Taylor is a very old-fashioned, traditional department store; the last of a dying breed. In order to stay in business,

they offer incredible promotions at the beginning of each season, and have various deals and sales throughout the year. Furthermore, the store is not nearly as large as Macy's, so you won't be overwhelmed. Thus, you can often buy new merchandise in pleasant surroundings at a 25% discount. It beats the outlets many times. They run a lot of coupon promotions in the *New York Times,* so you can often latch onto a deal simply by reading the newspaper each day.

All store services are available, including store shoppers and translators.

MACY'S

Herald Sq., Broadway at 34th St. (Subway: N, R, Q, W, B, D, F, or V to 34th St./Herald Sq.).

I'm not sure why there are other stores in New York, or the world. And I'm also not sure how anyone can be strong enough to shop the whole store and even grasp what it has. It has everything. This is the largest retail store in America—and one of the largest in the world. It's so big you can get a headache.

Macy's is two stores joined together (it has an older and a newer wing), so the front and the back of the store don't necessarily feel related. The designer floor is pretty good; the kids' floor is great; and the choice in terms of selection of anything, from petites to juniors to cute but inexpensive clothes, is vast.

Don't miss the Cellar, the downstairs housewares–and-gourmet-food section—there's Eatsi's, which is a market space you will adore. Go early.

Check out the mezzanine shops, which you would pass by if you didn't know they were there—The Metropolitan Museum of Art actually has its own little gift shop up here. There's also a department on the mezzanine with bath and spa products.

There's a small shopping area in the basement next to Eatsi's that I find very interesting—great New York souvenirs, including ones that can be purchased from a vending machine.

Saks Fifth Avenue

611 Fifth Ave., at 50th St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave.).

Even though there may be a Saks in your hometown, try to visit the Saks in New York. They've expanded their space and glitzed up their store in the past few years to sail into the new century with a modern look that I think is just the right size—not too big, not too small.

In fact, if I personally need something and don't have time to try my bargain resources, or if I just want to shop in one department store to get a feel for what's happening in the world of style, I invariably choose Saks. This is my favorite department store in New York because it's easy and convenient.

The store has full services for gift buying, personal shopping, translation, and so on. There's even a wonderful desk on the first floor that provides free sightseeing information. Best of all, the ladies' room is large and clean, and possesses banquettes, facilities for women with disabilities, tons of phones, a change machine, and everything except a fax machine. You may find me there.

The fragrance department is world renowned as the best in America and is trying very hard to keep that reputation now that Sephora is across the street. Saks has a special deal with most perfume houses, so it launches new fragrances as soon as they come out. The store also has a variety of unique gift and purchase promotions. Discounts are available through the Palace Hotel and the Drake Hotel.

Frank MacIntosh, the home-furnishing tabletop guru, has left Henri Bendel to set up shop at Saks—the effect isn't what it used to be, but there is some nice merchandise.

There's a wonderful cafe for lunch, Cafe SFA (p. 75).

Zitomer Department Store

969 Madison Ave., at 76th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

Since Zitomer's now calls itself a department store, who am I to blow against the wind? The former fancy-pants drugstore

now sells children's fashion upstairs and accessories (for people and pets) in the next-door store. The doggy bakery is gone.

Department Store Warehouses

BLOOMINGDALE'S
630 Old Country Rd., Garden City, N.Y.

This warehouse is in a former Stern's store in a mall and may not be permanent—take the Queens-Midtown Tunnel to the Long Island Expressway (LIE); LIE to exit 38, which is the Northern State Parkway. Take the Northern State Parkway to Meadowbrook Parkway south to exit M2 directly to Roosevelt Field Mall. There is no public transportation. Mall phone **✆ 516/873-2700.**

FABRICS, NOTIONS, TRIMS & MORE

If you have nerves of steel, you might want to wander in the 200 West block of 40th Street, where all the fabric stores are lined up on both sides of the street. The most famous of these is B&J Fabrics, but there are dozens of them; you can get a headache in no time at all. It's great fun. Can't get to the Garment District? Not to worry, 57th Street has more than enough to keep you in stitches.

B&J FABRICS
525 Seventh Ave., at 38th St. (Subway: 1, 2, 3, 9, N, R, Q, W, or 7 to 42nd St./Times Sq.).

They've moved! The new store is slightly larger than the old one, and everything is on one floor. A Garment District icon, this store can be overwhelming, but a good eye can find the best. I'm not sure these are bargain prices, but students get a 10% discount for cash and you get a discount if you buy 12 yards or more. Though B&J is primarily a fabric resource, it also sells some trims.

Hyman Hendler

67 W. 38th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves. (Subway: 1, 2, 3, 9, N, R, Q, W, or 7 to 42nd St./Times Sq., or B, D, F, V, or 7 to 42nd St./5th Ave.).

So fancy, so special, so much a scene of a New York from days past—this is an old-fashioned ribbon broker, now mostly serving the trade. However, anyone can buy. It's like a museum here and you will go nuts for the colors, the quality, and the possibilities.

M&J Trimming

1008 Avenue of the Americas (Sixth Ave.), at 38th St. (Subway: 1, 2, 3, 9, N, R, Q, W, or 7 to 42nd St./ Times Sq., or B, D, F, V, or 7 to 42nd St./5th Ave.).

This branch of M&J specializes in trims only: buttons, gems, feathers, braids, and trims of all kinds, as well as all other sorts of fun gewgaws. The walls are lined with cards wrapped with yards of trim. If you buy the whole card, you get a 10% discount. This is where to find your Chanel-style braid.

Mokuba New York

55 W.39th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves. (Subway: 1, 2, 3, 9, N, R, Q, W, or 7 to 42nd St./Times Sq., or B, D, F, V, or 7 to 42nd St./5th Ave.).

This Japanese ribbon resource, with stores in Paris and Tokyo, is in the same geographic location as Hyman Hendler (see above), but 1 block over—so I am always confused. Ribbons and trimmings freaks should see them both, although Mokuba tends to be very, very expensive.

Tender Buttons

143 E. 62nd St., between Lexington and Third aves. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

If it's buttons you need, or even cuff links, this small and wondrous shop can occupy you all day. Even if you don't need

buttons, you'd need your marbles examined if you didn't stop by. ***Tip:*** You can buy Chanel-style buttons here, but you can't buy any fake Chanel buttons or the sorts with the interlocking C's on them. (If you are missing a genuine Chanel button, take the garment to the boutique and they will give you a missing button if they have it in stock.)

I will admit that this store can be very pricey. I collect buttons and rarely shop here, just because I simply can't afford it.

THE FASHION CHAINS & MULTIPLES

Note: Most of these chains have additional shops throughout the city. Check a phone book or ask your hotel concierge for a complete selection and to find the store most convenient to you or your hotel.

Ann Taylor

645 Madison Ave., at 60th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

This is specialized retailing at its finest, with private-label merchandise now leading the way for a solid career look. There are also weekend looks, accessories, shoes, and a complete fragrance and bath-and-body line. Call © **800/228-5000** for a catalog or mail order. There are branches around town, other than the one listed above, but they pale in comparison.

Ann Taylor Loft

488 Madison Ave., at 52nd St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave.); 150 East 42nd St., at Lexington Ave. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, 7, or S to Grand Central); 560 Broadway, between Spring and Prince sts. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.); 1290 Sixth Ave., between 51st and 52nd sts. (Subway: B, D, F, or V to Rockefeller Center); 1155 Third Ave., at 68th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College); 1492 Third Ave., at 84th St. (Subway: 4, 5, or 6 to 86th St.); other locations.

The Loft was Ann Taylor's answer to Gap opening Old Navy—it's a less expensive line that mimics the thought of the real line, but at lower prices and lower quality. I am not impressed, but check it out yourself; there's one in every neighborhood of New York these days.

Banana Republic

626 Fifth Ave., at 50th St. (Subway: B, D, V, or F to Rockefeller Center).

There was a time when we feared Benetton would conquer the world, but they lost out and Gap seemed to win. Now Gap has let its sister company, Banana Republic, step into the limelight and into an enormous, and stunning, new store in Rockefeller Center.

Banana Republic has been a huge hit ever since the company rebuilt its image as the poor person's Ralph Lauren. Gone are the jungle stores and the fun atmosphere; you may not even remember that ancient history. This store is all brushed steel and deco details and marble floors and glorious lighting. Yes, the lighting helps.

Club Monaco

12 W. 57th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave.); 699 Fifth Ave., at 55th St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave.); 520 Broadway, at Spring St. (Subway: W or R to Prince St.); 121 Prince St., at Greene St. (Subway: W or R to Prince St.); 160 Fifth Ave., at 21st St. (Subway: R, W, or 6 to 23rd St.); 1111 Third Ave., at 65th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College); 2376 Broadway, at 87th St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 86th St.).

This is a huge Canadian chain that's expanding and moving into the limelight due to its purchase by none other than **Ralph Lauren.** The firm specializes in translating fashion looks into affordable clothing without doing the cheapie trendy thing. New merchandise comes in every month; the turnover

is extraordinary. A firm, solid resource for conservative yet hip young things in the business community.

Eddie Bauer

578 Broadway, between Houston and Prince sts. (Subway: W or R to Prince St.).

Who would have ever believed that a store famous for its weekend gear could make it in Manhattan? Eddie Bauer has several stores in town, similar to the ones in your hometown mall. The store has weekend clothes as well as work clothes for those prepsters who like conservative clothing, gifts and novelty items, and luggage. A few of the stores have sensational home-furnishings departments.

Gap

With stores too numerous to list, you're likely to see one every few blocks while walking around the city.

If you are British or French, you'll die laughing when you realize how much you've been overpaying for this merchandise. Furthermore, everyone should know that Gap specializes in moving its stock, so it has very good and very regular sales.

Also, certain stores in Manhattan are holding points for dumped sale merchandise. I once searched five Gap stores for a specific tangerine orange linen skirt (perfect for Mexico); I finally found it on East 23rd Street!

H&M

640 Fifth Ave., at 51st St. (Subway: B, D, F, or V to Rockefeller Center); other locations.

H&M stands for Hennes and Mauritz, a Swedish firm that has taken New York by storm and now has several stores around Manhattan. The Fifth Avenue store is the flagship. This is a great source for men's, women's, and children's clothing inspired by the styles on the catwalks. Very good prices.

J. Crew
347 Madison Ave., at 45th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, 7, or S to 42nd St./Grand Central); 99 Prince St., between Mercer and Greene sts. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.).

There was a time in recent fashion history when J. Crew ruled the world of catalogue and retail shopping. Things have been difficult lately, maybe because all the preppies have gotten hip. Still, this new store is a showcase and reveals the style through the stripes.

Old Navy
150 W. 34th St., between Sixth and Seventh aves. (Subway: 1, 2, 3, or 9 to 34th St.); 610 Sixth Ave., at 18th St., Ladies' Mile (Subway: 1 or 9 to 18th St.; other locations.

My goal in life is to take the Old Navy franchise to France and retire as a zillionaire. One look at the new flagship on West 34th Street and you will forget that this brand started life as the cheapie line from Gap. All the stores are good, but the flagship on West 34th Street is one of the best stores in all of New York. There's a diner in the basement. See p. 94 for more information.

Talbots
525 Madison Ave., at 54th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

Talbots Men
529 Madison Ave., at 55th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

Attention conservatives, preppies, and traditionalists: This New England company has gone from mail order to retail, and now has stores all over the United States and Japan. They had a short period of financial trouble but their last few years have been dynamite. The twice-annual sales are the times to stock up. They have kids stores and petites areas and even Petites Stores.

FOOD

Green Markets

The best of them all is at Union Square, Broadway between 14th Street and 17th Street, held on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday—Saturday is the best day (see p. 13 for details). Others worth exploring include:

PS No. 41
Greenwich Ave., at Charles St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to Christopher St.).

A Saturday and Sunday flea market with green market; nice but not extraordinary.

Food Neighborhoods

If you are a foodie looking for some ethnic markets, you'll want to hop on the E, V, R, or F train and jump off at Roosevelt Avenue in Jackson Heights, Queens, where you will find a 1-mile stretch of the United Nations of grocery stores. Just prowl Roosevelt Avenue: It'll change from Irish to Filipino to Colombian to Korean.

If you want to stick to Manhattan, an old standby is what I call the Spice Neighborhood, on Ninth Avenue in the high 40s, which is home to many Italian markets as well as specialty food shops. Browse. Don't overdress. Here you'll find burlap bags laden with spices and coffee beans. And I'm not talking Starbucks, my dears.

With the arrival of several new chefs in Manhattan and the rebirth of the Columbus Circle area as food-land, note that the largest **Whole Foods** (p. 14) in the U.S. is in the Time Warner Center.

PS No. 44
Columbus Ave., at 77th St. (Subway: A, B, C, or D to 81st St.).

A small market that sells fruits, pies, pretzels, and honey on Sunday—not anything to write home about.

Specialty Markets

New York is a city of foodies, and these are the stores that tide them all over.

Balducci's
155 W. 66th St., between Broadway and Amsterdam Ave. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 66th St./Lincoln Center).

A foodie's dream come true.

Broadway Farm
2335 Broadway, at 85th St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 86th St.).

My take is that this is a Fairway wannabe (see below). Uptown a few blocks, the Farm is clean and neat and brand-new.

Dean & Deluca
1 Rockefeller Plaza (Subway: B, D, F, or V to Rockefeller Center); 560 Broadway, between Prince and Spring sts. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.); other locations.

For the uninitiated, Dean & Deluca is the dean of fancy food markets, the fanciest of the chic purveyors of things imported and sublime. Need I say it's expensive? In addition to a well-rounded selection of everything you might want to eat, to cook, or to take to go, there's also some cookware and a few cookbooks. My problem with them is that I've seen the same foodstuffs in other markets for a lot less money, and I won't pay outrageous prices for the privilege of being chic. Nonetheless, it's a landmark, an icon, and a statement in food and fashion.

Dylan's Candy Bar

1011 Third Ave., at 60th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

Maybe no one would care if Dylan wasn't Ralph Lauren's daughter, but this modern candy shop has an old-fashioned soda fountain that serves egg creams, and boasts two floors of penny candy–style containers filled with all sorts of goodies. You can also purchase gift baskets ready-made or custom-created. See p. 14 for more.

Eli Zabar Eat & Eat Gifts

1062 Madison Ave., at 80th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

This is another operation from the famous Zabar food family. This creative branch, consisting of a market, a cafe, and a gift shop, is truly super—it's one of the best destinations in Manhattan. The gift shop is really adorable and filled with items in all price ranges.

Fairway

2127 Broadway, at 74th St. (Subway: 1, 2, 3, or 9 to 72nd St.).

Best for unusual mushrooms, dried fruits, and cheeses, this is a grocery store with so-so regular produce but great exotics. They also carry many imported foodstuffs and the usual things you may need. Upstairs is an enormous health food department and a cafe. Prices range from extravagant to very fair. This place is great fun.

Fauchon

442 Park Ave., at 56th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.); other locations.

They are multiplying like *lapin* (rabbits)—every shopping district in New York now has a branch of Fauchon, the French big brand in gourmet food. The retail shops sells products from France, while the tea salon serves plenty of croissants.

OLIVIERS & CO.
Grand Central Station Terminal (42nd St., at Park Ave.), at Graybar Passage. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, S, or 7 to 42nd St./Grand Central).

The same man who created the beauty chain L'Occitane created this store, which features olive oil from all over the world, with an emphasis on Mediterranean sources. This place also sells many French foodstuffs. Prices are twice what they are in France, but if you don't mind spending $36 for a tin of olive oil, you won't be disappointed. There are several shops around Manhattan.

WHOLE FOODS
Time Warner Center, Columbus Circle at W. 59th St. (Subway: A, C, E, B, D, 1, or 9 to 59th St./Columbus Circle).

Whole Foods is an almost California-style health food store with far more than organic chicken breasts. This is a virtual department store, and the shoppers are worth picking over also.

ZABAR'S
2245 Broadway, at 80th St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 79th St.).

This has been the home of every take-out and specialty food for New York mavens for decades.

FURS

The fur business has changed tremendously in recent years; things are suddenly looking up. Now that you're ready to come in from the cold, there are plenty of new facts you can snuggle up to.

I am here to state that I believe in ranched fur; I wear both ranched fur and synthetic fur. If you're ready to turn in your good Republican cloth coat, you should be ready for the thrill of your life—Milan and New York are the fur-wearing cities of the world, and New York is the best place to buy and buy well.

Remember that cheap coats, especially those cheap minks and the $995 specials, are made in Asia and are vastly different from a coat made in Europe or the United States. As mother always said, you generally get what you pay for. As fur moves back into the spotlight, it is quality fur, not mass fur, that makes the grade.

The fur union went to hell in a handbasket a few years ago, and ever since then, there has been such deregulation—much like in the airline industry—that anything goes. You must be on your toes. The only way to make sure you are getting the kind of quality you deserve is to buy from a reputable furrier. And believe me, the markup in the fur business is on less-expensive coats. The markup on fine skins from a superior wholesale furrier is less than 10%. The real savings in a New York fur-buying spree comes in buying a top-of-the-line coat for $5,500 to $7,500 at wholesale.

It gets trickier and trickier to find out what's going on, since most of the big department stores are now advertising and selling what look like awfully nice mink coats in the $2,000-to-$3,000 price range. Because we tend to trust department stores, we have no way of knowing if these coats are cheapies made in Asia and marked up for profit, or really good buys. And not knowing is reason enough to buy wholesale from a furrier you trust and avoid the big department stores. And while you're at it, also avoid the mass producers and the warehouse sales held in giant coliseums, hotel ballrooms, and stadiums (if you want quality, anyway). Go for a well-known furrier in the district—Seventh Avenue and west on 30th Street.

A fine mink coat costs more than $995, and while it can cost $3,000 to $5,000, the difference between the coat you get for $5,000 from a department store and the coat you get from a private furrier for the same price is monumental.

As I said before, coats made in Asia are usually not as technically well made as coats made in the United States. Collars are usually not turned as well, sleeves may be set in very tightly, and the skins themselves are not as fine. European skins are also not as fine as U.S. skins. By European, I do not mean

Russian (Russian sable is the best of the best). There are only a certain number of minks being ranched in the United States; the rest come from somewhere else, and you need to know where they are coming from.

In terms of what kind of fur to pick, you do have choices, and the choices change every few years because of the demands of fashion as well as what the breeders have in stock. Mink is the most practical fur—it goes everywhere in style and wears the longest. It's also very lightweight. Longhair furs do not wear nearly so well, and certainly are not meant for rugged, everyday wear over a prolonged number of years. They are also decidedly passé, although there is a growing trend to bring back fox. Sheared beaver is a good choice if you aren't buying mink. Shearling coats are big for casual wear and weekends. Aside from mink, beaver, and shearling, there is renewed interest in broadtail, broadtail with sable trim, and especially brown broadtail, which is much harder to find than black. Cashmere coats trimmed with mink or sable are also very big now. Last, but not least, is the category of knitted fur—an invention that came out of Canada and is done with beaver. This is extremely chic, especially in a short-length coat in a fabulous fashion color. A car coat in knitted beaver costs about $3,000 wholesale.

If your education in mink took place years ago, you may be in for a shock. Most of what you thought was important is outdated. The new realities:

- Do not confuse the names of colors with trade names such as Blackglama. Some people will try to tell you that a similar name means the same thing. Blackglama also happens to be very out at the moment, but that's another story.
- Forget all that stuff you learned about "fully let out skins"—the new trend is called "skin on skin"; it looks more like a patchwork.
- If you are looking at fully let-out coats, ask how old they are. The value of a fur coat is directly related to how old it is because the skins dry out each year.

- Dyed fur used to be considered a bad thing—one you pounced upon as a reason not to buy a specific coat. Now it's common, even in natural tones, and is not considered a reason to avoid a sale. Often chemicals (if not dyes) are used to enhance or enrich the color and tone of the natural fur. It's the same thing you do to your hair every 6 weeks.
- Italian hippie looks, inspired years ago by the work of the Fendi sisters, are out—don't invest in them now. Coats are more classic—slimmer and closer to the body. Swing lengths are on the way out. Fringes, studs, flapping tails, and doodads are definitely not worth investing in.
- The real news in mink, especially in plucked mink, is color. People thinking of traditional mink coats think of black and brown shades. Here's the big shocker: Dark is out, light is in. Honey tones are the must-have of the future. Also in: Bright color. Rich color. It's absolutely fabulous.

Please note that semantics are everything in this business; furriers who sell "sheared" mink sell a product that is inferior to "plucked" mink—and don't let anyone tell you it's the same process. Shearing is bad for the remaining fur and breaks down the hide in a way that plucking doesn't. You don't ask, you don't get.

If you are buying traditional mink (not plucked), examine it carefully. Silkiness counts in mink; if the hairs are spiky, long, or coarse, they will wear out. Look at the underfur, which should be dense and thick. A good mink coat should be practically indestructible. Roll it in a ball and watch the hairs jump back. If the coat doesn't perform, jump away from the sale.

Don't forget fur-lined raincoats or the possibility of having your old mink coat made into a fur-lined raincoat, which is what I did. It costs about $3,000: Your old coat is dressed and plucked and pieced together with quilted parts to keep the coat warm but lightweight. Fur collar and cuffs show, the rest of the fur is inside. You can choose whatever shell you want; I picked an Italian microfiber.

Do not ask a furrier to send an empty box to the home of an out-of-state relative so you can avoid paying New York State sales tax. Tacky, tacky.

There are retail stores that sell used furs in Manhattan, and used furs are also sold at upscale charity shops. The problem with a used fur is that you have no idea just how old it is and how it's been cared for. Buy with care. A fur coat loses most of its value in its first few years of life because the skins dry out. The only way to tell what condition a coat is in is to open the seams and have a furrier evaluate the pelts.

Superior Furs

Cheap fur looks great until you put it next to quality fur; then you get the idea that quality pays. If you can afford a quality fur, you'll never be sorry. A superior mink coat will give you 10 to 20 years of superior wear, looking just about as good as new for the first 10 years. A quality mink coat should be female skins, which are lighter than male skins and wear better. Most mass-produced coats are made of male skins. A quality fur should be ranched in the United States and made in the United States—by someone you trust.

Although there are a half-dozen famous furriers in the fur district, most of whom take customers with references, I am only going to give you the name of one. This maker is top of the line, has a private showroom, and is not open for browsers—they are interested in people who are actually in the market for a fur coat. You don't have to buy, but the idea is that you don't wander in, touch the furs, and leave. If you want a $2,500 mink coat, they are not for you. If you want a $12,000 mink coat for $5,500 to $7,500, see below for your new best friend.

Corniche Furs & Luxury Outerwear

345 Seventh Ave., at 30th St., 20th floor (Subway: 1 or 9 to 28th St.).

To get a quick grasp on how the fur business has changed, note that this old faithful resource now prides itself on "luxury outerwear," though the business is still at the hands of Leonard Kahn. If the name sounds slightly familiar, it could be because Ben Kahn is one of the world's most famous furriers. Leonard Kahn is his nephew.

While Leonard has been in the fur business for decades, the business he is in now is relatively new and his products are very new and hot; in fact, he is always bragging that they have the youngest team in the business. Their business is mostly wholesale—they make coats for big-name designer labels like Bob Mackie and for department stores (no names, please), but they also sell to some private customers like you and me.

Yes, Leonard will sell you a traditional mink coat or a not-so-traditional mink coat in honey tones that reverses to suede. Yes, Leonard will take your old out-of-fashion mink and turn it into a raincoat or better yet, pluck it and make it something fabulous. More importantly, Leonard and his team will now make a silk/micropore shell, or sell you a fur-trimmed cashmere coat, or come up with any number of ways to keep you warm and chic without draping you head-to-toe in minks.

Your options are many: buy an already made-up coat, design your own coat, or work with Leonard's designers to get a custom coat with products shipped from Europe. If you are a special size, this option is especially convenient. A custom mink coat will be about $8,000 to $10,000, yet the one I have just fallen in love with—a skin-on-skin, light-as-a-feather, honey-colored reversible job that goes to suede on the other side—is a mere $7,500. I'm saving up.

Coats off the rack are less expensive than custom-made, and there are sales. A jacket is less than a coat, of course. A cashmere trench coat–style coat with a plucked mink collar and cuffs and nutria lining costs about $3,500; a shearling coat ranges from $1,450 on up, depending on quality—the reversible ones cost about $2,250.

Note: Every January there is a sale, and the prices are so low you will weep from greed and delight.

I trust Leonard Kahn 100%, and I send you there knowing you will get the best deal in New York. Call for an appointment; serious shoppers only: ✆ **212/564-1735.**

HANDBAGS

Even in New York, a woman is first judged by her handbag, then her shoes, and then her hands (watch and manicure). So think about these tips:

- If you're looking for a moderately priced handbag, one of the department stores is your best bet.
- All the big-name European leather-goods stores that carry shoes also sell handbags, such as **Bottega Veneta, Fendi, Prada, Ferragamo,** and **Gucci.** I must say that sale times in these big-name shops may make the goods seem fairly priced.
- For something different, check out the little-known Euro names such as **Anya Hindmarch** (29 E. 60th St., near Madison Ave.).
- All discount sources sell handbags; often they sell name-brand handbags. Try **Daffy's**—especially their East 57th Street store (between Park and Lexington aves.)—which often has a good selection of leather goods. Loehmann's can be good too. See p. 112 for more on Daffy's.
- There are a few sources on the Lower East Side that will sell or even order big-name handbags at a 20% discount. I really haven't found it worth the trouble, but many do it. **Fine & Klein** is the most famous (119 Orchard St., at Delancey St.). They are closed on Saturday.
- During big sale seasons, bags are likely to be marked down 50% . . . except at Vuitton, which never marks down merchandise. If you want a big-name bag and aren't picky about which name, check out Bergdorf's or Saks during sale season.

- There are a few upmarket stores that sell what look like designer bags without the labels. They usually cost $500 instead of $1,500. Phew.

Bulgari
730 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

To bring in the young crowd, this store launched seasonal collections of handbags, mostly in leather.

Crouch & Fitzgerald
400 Madison Ave., at 48th St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave.).

New owners have made this store much smaller, but it is still packed with various handbags, totes, pieces of luggage, and travel gear. There's a good combination of name brands mixed among the house brand, which is made in Europe. The emphasis is on the kind of handbags that carry everything for travel; there's also the Sherpa Shop for doggy accessories. See p. 111 for more.

Dooney & Bourke
20 E. 60th St., between Madison and Park aves. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

There was a time when Dooney & Bourke seemed to be just like Coach—but they both passed that style marker and have gone separate ways. Dooney & Bourke—in new digs—has a handbag that is so chic, so stylish, and so hot that I drool thinking about it—it's got a little leather string tie. Additionally, there is a printed canvas line that doesn't warm my cockles, but the design is very grown up and worth looking at.

J. S. Suarez
450 Park Ave., at 56th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

This is the most famous discount source in New York for shoes, bags, and small leather goods. They use factories in Italy

to ship designer-like goods that aren't copies and don't have designer labels. Prices are not low, but they are less than in the big-name stores.

I was once in need of a status handbag and was shocked that the average such animal now sells for $500 and up. I was further shocked to realize that I hadn't stocked up at any sale and would be forced to buy regular retail. A daylong search of every handbag possibility in Manhattan ensued, and I am pleased to announce J. S. Suarez the winner: Their goods are for the woman who wants the look but doesn't need the label.

JUDITH LEIBER
987 Madison Ave., at 77th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

Long live the queen of witty, sophisticated handbags. Leiber is best known for her crystal- and jewel-encrusted "mini-sculpture" handbags, in shapes ranging from a tomato to a ladybug.

KATE SPADE
454 Broome St., at Mercer St. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.).

Some say she's passé, other's say hurray. Whatever your viewpoint, a small empire is definitely being built on "cute" handbags with a preppy-cum-bohemian appeal.

KIESELSTEIN-CORD
454 W. Broadway, at Prince St. (Subway: N or W to Prince St.).

From animal-shaped belt buckles to eyewear to handbags with feet, these distinctive (and pricey) designs are now even being copied in Hong Kong because everyone wants to be part of the cult. Look for the lizard, frog, or horse hoof belt buckles as the biggest status symbol this side of a $500 pair of sunglasses.

Lana Marks

645 Madison Ave., at 60th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

The bags here begin around $1,000 (more often $4,000–$6,000). They exist as much as financial statements and icons to those in the know as Kleenex and lipstick holders. Styles are classic yet cutting edge, and are often named for celebs and/or royalty. The colors of leather are remarkable, and you should go just to stare.

Lederer

457 Madison Ave., at 51st St. (Subway: E, F, or 6 to Lexington Ave./51st St.).

This place imports stylish, good-quality bags by name brands, and sells them for less money. They have a large range of colors and textured skins. Nothing is inexpensive, but the quality is good. This store competes with J. S. Suarez, which is more edgy.

Lulu Guinness

394 Bleecker St., at W. 11th St. (Subway: A, C, or E to 14th St. or L to 8th Ave.)

This British designer creates handbags that are whimsical enough to make you smile—pots of flowers, tiny storefronts, and even dress-up for nights on the town.

Tiffany & Co.

727 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

Yes, this is the same Tiffany & Co. you've come to count on for diamonds by the yard and boxes colored robin's egg blue. Now they have handbags too. The really ritzy evening bags cost thousands of dollars, but you can buy a simpler bag, in leather, for $200 to $400.

HIP & HOT

THE APARTMENT
101 Crosby St., at Prince St. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.).

It's not about the film of the same name, but the gimmick of the same name—this shop sells interior design and is set up as a real apartment, with fun, funky, and minimalist furnishings.

APC
131 Mercer St., between Prince and Spring sts. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.).

With only a few stores in the world, APC is a true cult clothing shop, known for the cut of its basics. Do not confuse with **APOC,** which stands for A Piece of Cloth and is a creation of Issey Miyake.

AUTO
805 Washington St., between Horatio and Gansevoort sts. (Subway: A, C, or E to 14th St. or L to 8th Ave.).

This Meat Packing District store offers industrial design for the home and office, and is the talk of the town since it gives you some place other than Jeffrey (p. 24) to see when you come to this part of Manhattan.

INTERMIX
125 Fifth Ave., at 19th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, W, Q, or L to Union Sq.); 210 Columbus Ave., at 68th St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 66th St./Lincoln Center); 1003 Madison Ave., at 77th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

Don't let the multiple addresses throw you—this is less a chain than an idea whose time has come: hot clothes and bags from cutting-edge designers in all price ranges.

Mayle
252 Elizabeth St., between Houston and Prince sts. (Subway: 6 to Spring St.).

The trendy one in the family is no longer her Dad, Peter. Jane is becoming known for not only her store, but also her lifestyle. She is often seen with the in-crowd in her snappy designs.

JEANS

All department stores carry a bevy of choices, but specialty stores are holding their own in the new-jeans and used-jeans markets, and jeans purists are quick to point out that designer jeans pale when compared to **Levi's.** About 50% of shoppers looking for jeans in New York want to buy Levi's; many Europeans come to the United States with a list of Levi's style numbers and sizes for friends and family members back home. Unfortunately, they never realize that the choices in denim, throughout the city, are almost endless. Those in the market for Levi's should see the Original Levi's Store, Reminiscence, and SoHo Jeans, in this section.

Diesel Style Lab
416 W. Broadway, between Prince and Spring sts. (Subway: W or R to Prince St.).

This place has Italian jeans known to fit the butt, and other fashions and trends as well.

Diesel Super Store
770 Lexington Ave., at 60th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

This place has jeans, jeans, and more jeans, including made-to-order pairs.

LUCKY BRAND JEANS
38 Greene St., between Broome and Grand sts. (Subway: 6 to Spring St.); 172 Fifth Ave., at 22nd St. (Subway: W or R to 23rd St.).

Wall-to-wall jeans from a relative newcomer in the denim-branding biz who have become so popular that they now have a shop on Fifth Avenue, and one in just about every other trendy shopping district in town.

OMG
548 Broadway, between Prince and Spring sts. (Subway: W or R to Prince St.); other locations.

This is like a warehouse for new jeans.

ORIGINAL LEVI'S STORE
750 Lexington Ave., at 60th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

Levi's opened its first New York store across the street from Bloomingdale's on Lexington Avenue and the "Original" is a large and excellent shopper's delight.

REMINISCENCE
74 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, Q, W, or L to Union Sq.).

The granddaddy of vintage-jeans stores, this firm has been a staple in the boutique business since the 1960s (I think I date myself here). This is where you'll find the best prices on Levi's in town.

SOHO JEANS
767 Lexington Ave., at 60th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.); 69 W. Houston St., between Wooster and W. Broadway (Subway: W or R to Prince St.); 254 Columbus Ave., at 71st St. (Subway: A, B, C, or D to 72nd St.).

Don't let the name of the store throw you off the trail. The store has three branches and one of them is next to Bloomie's and across from Levi's. The stores are small, but they specialize in prime used jeans; all Levi's 501s. They are about $50 if perfect; $40 with holes.

JEWELRY

Jewelry shopping in New York, as in any other place in the world—big city or small—is a matter of trust. The big, fancy jewelers exist not only because their designs are so irresistible, but because the house has provided years (maybe centuries) of trust. True, every now and then you hear about a trusted jeweler of 50 years going to the slammer for passing off bottoms of Coke bottles as emeralds. But it's rare.

The big-name New York jewelers, whether they are American, South American, or European, have no such scandals attached to them. I'm ready to stake my reputation on the big reputations. That's why I recommend the big stores. Yes, you pay top-of-the-line prices, but you get something very worthwhile: reliability. Never be afraid to walk into a big-name jeweler. You needn't be in the market for a $106,000 bracelet to be a customer at a fancy jeweler. You may find something for as little as $50; surely you will find many choices at $500. How you are treated is a function of how well dressed you are and how you demand to be treated. Some places pride themselves on having a fancy name but being accessible to regular people like us; **Tiffany & Co.** is one of those places. They don't want you to come for breakfast, but they want you to buy something as a souvenir of your trip to New York.

The reliability of the big jewelers is also related to resale. You can always sell a piece of jewelry made by a status firm, such as **Tiffany, Cartier,** and **Harry Winston.** No matter how old it is, a genuinely fine piece of jewelry from a trusted house is a good investment. It may even appreciate over the years. It will hold value for auction or resale and be the kind of thing

your heirs fight to inherit. As my old friend Hans Stern, internationally famous jeweler, explained to me: "Buying from a well-known jeweler is like buying a painting. You are paying for the quality of the art as well as the quality and the reputation of the signature." Some people buy paintings because they like the picture and don't care if it has value; other people go to the big dealers and buy signed works by renowned artists so they can trust their purchase. This is a personal choice.

There is a jewelry district on 47th Street between Fifth and Sixth avenues, and you are welcome to shop there. You may find many wonderful things. The prices will be better than at **Van Cleef,** for sure. However, like all other businesses, insiders run the jewelry business. Strangers off the street can, and do, get taken. Industrial-grade diamonds may be sold to you; and color-enhanced stones may be touted as the best money can buy—irradiated stones will not give you cancer, but they may not be what you had in mind. Dealers know what they are doing; I do not. Consider yourself warned. If you want fun, go to the district. If you want safe, go to a trusted jeweler.

Tip: It pays to know something about what you are doing, but you can have a perfectly good time and walk away satisfied even if you don't know what you are doing. Remember that fun and big-time investments are two different things.

Faux jewelry is, of course, socially acceptable. It's always been worn, but fewer people talked about it, that's all. Almost all important jewels are copied—to fool the burglar. Even Elizabeth Taylor has admitted that there are paste copies of her gem collection. Cheap faux often looks blatantly fake—the gold is too brassy, the gems are lackluster, the fittings are not fine. If you are planning on passing off your collection as something related to the crown jewels, choose carefully and pay the extra money. A good fake necklace will probably cost $300; good fake earrings may be $50 to $100. If you want a bad copy of a good watch, they are currently sold on every street corner for about $25. A good eye can see that the watches are too thick to be real. These same watches, by the

way, cost $10 on Canal Street, but their reliability is obviously not ensured.

Used and antique jewelry can be bought at auctions, in certain jewelry shops, and in antiques shops. But even earrings from the 1950s are pricey these days, so have a good eye and know what you are buying. For old and used watches, check out **Aaron Faber** (666 Fifth Ave., at 53rd St.), and **Tourneau** (635 Madison Ave., at 59th St.), which has a retro department.

As for contemporary jewelry, sterling silver with semiprecious gemstones is a great look; it's also immensely affordable. Tiffany sells this look, and many smaller boutiques have come to specialize in it. **David Yurman** (729 Madison Ave., at 64th St.) has become famous for his combinations of silver and gold.

The Big Names

New York is famous for big-name jewelers, from Americans to international jewelers from around the world. While luxury is more in style than ever before (at least since the Depression), one of the most interesting trends is that these big names are cultivating a younger image and offering affordable items to bring you into the family. **Bulgari** has recently added silks, handbags, and sunglasses to its range and opened a store on Madison Avenue that's meant to be less intimidating than its spiffed-up and really drop-dead Fifth Avenue rehab. **Hans Stern,** my Brazilian buddy, has turned most of his business over to his sons, who have retooled the Fifth Avenue store and come up with a very kicky gimmick—the rings have stars cut into the undersides of the gold. A dazzling notion! All of New York sparkles a little bit more now that we have more options and a range that suits more budgets.

BULGARI
730 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (Subway: F to 57th St.);
783 Madison Ave., at 67th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

CARTIER
653 Fifth Ave., at 53rd St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave.); 828 Madison Ave., at 69th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

DAVID YURMAN
729 Madison Ave., at 64th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

HARRY WINSTON
718 Fifth Ave., at 56th St. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

H. STERN
645 Fifth Ave., at 52nd St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave.).

TIFFANY & CO.
727 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

VAN CLEEF & ARPELS
744 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

A Discounter

FORTUNOFF
681 Fifth Ave., at 54th St. (Subway: F to 57th St. or E or V to 5th Ave.).

You name it, they've got it—from pearls to diamonds to gold to precious to semiprecious; from sterling to wear on your ears to sterling to eat with; and even some modern high-fashion pieces. But to be frank, I think there's something lacking in these styles. Maybe the designs are just too ordinary. However, lots of people shop here for a bargain—and like it.

This store is not as sophisticated as I would like, but it's a good source for discounted basics such as pearls, simple contemporary gold earrings, chains, silverware, and the like. Don't forget to go upstairs.

For antique jewelry buffs, look left when you walk in the door for the estate department.

For those who have been working the diamond district, come with your pen and paper and don't be shy. I was set to buy a pair of seashell earrings (don't ask) at a discount source in the district for $750, which I considered quite good. Then I found a similar pair at Fortunoff for $550. The pair at Fortunoff was not as well made as the pair I wanted, but they made me lose faith in my original jeweler. Don't buy from any no-name jewelry source until you have at least educated your eye and your budget to Fortunoff.

Fancy Fauxs

Erwin Pearl
677 Fifth Ave., at 53rd St. (Subway: F to 57th St. or E or V to 5th Ave.).

Erwin Pearl is a mass manufacturer of costume jewelry, and everything here is fake. The bad news is that it's a little confusing for real costume-jewelry aficionados. Erwin's specialty is fake pearls and they excel at it; this is the place to find dozens of different styles of chokers, multiple-strand ropes, and a variety of colors of pearls in classical or trendy styles. However, much of their other work, be it in silver or enamel, with cubic zirconia or with beads, is lacking in originality. And because there are so many different styles to choose from, it's almost overwhelming.

Prices begin around $25 but can escalate to several hundred dollars.

Gale Grant
485 Madison Ave., at 52nd St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave. or E, V, or 6 to Lexington Ave./51st St.).

Avoid this place at lunch hour, when every other chic woman in New York is trying to buy her fakes. Some of it sparkles a bit too much, but you can get great costume jewelry and some fabulous imitations here. King Tut's tomb wasn't this much fun.

JADED
1048 Madison Ave., at 80th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

Awash in a sea of jewels, Manhattan also has an ocean of imitations out there. For the rare piece that is part faux and part art (original creations that are not made with precious stones), stop by Jaded, where the designs are private label and the action is uptown. This is the classiest faux in town.

Prices range from $60 to $100 for earrings, but the workmanship is excellent and the pieces are unique. This is the "in" place for the Ladies Who Lunch who want to look fashionable and yet different. If you are looking to make just one Manhattan splurge that defines the essence of New York, this could be the place.

MARIKO OF PALM BEACH
998 Madison Ave., at 77th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

See p. 161.

RENE
1007 Madison Ave., at 78th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

See p. 162.

MATERNITY

Even when apparel sales were in the dumps, maternity wear was booming. Besides the specialty shops below, check out www.gap.com for Gap's new maternity line.

LIZ LANGE
958 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

This is the most sophisticated of the New York maternity boutiques.

Maternity Works
16 W. 57th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves., 3rd floor (Subway: F to 57th St.).

I spotted this store from the street; you can see its ad in the windows above and you become desperately curious. It's scary going up, but a good resource for all basics. Prices are very low.

Mimi Maternity
1125 Madison Ave., at 84th St. (Subway: 4, 5, or 6 to 86th St.); 1021 Third Ave., at 60th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

Offering a more suburban look, Mimi Maternity stores are carefully placed in wealthy residential districts.

Mommy Chic
235 Mulberry St., between Prince and Spring sts. (Subway: 6 to Bleecker St.).

The clothes here have a downtown philosophy—not your average pull-on pants with elastic panel. This place also sells baby clothes.

A Pea in the Pod
860 Madison Ave., at 70th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

This is a chain of moderately priced maternity-wear shops that specialize in fashion, style, and a bit of hip humor for the expecting. This new flagship store has everything from clothes for work to weekend and wedding duds.

MENSWEAR

There's no question that Manhattan is the men's shopping capital of America. Furthermore, it's one of the few cities where

there is so much bargain merchandise that even a man who hates to shop will be astonished by the opportunities to save. International businessmen and dignitaries, step this way. Special-size men, turn to p. 224; New York is your place too.

Almost every man that lives in New York (and many who have just visited) has been to **Barney's** and has an opinion about it. Barney's is surely the most famous men's store in New York. Now that there are uptown and downtown Barney's, men have even more to explore and can exclaim that perhaps they need no other store in Manhattan.

If you still want more, stroll the area I call Men's Mad—Madison Avenue in the mid-40s—where there is a cluster of men's shops (most of them famous names), many of which specialize in conservative business attire. This is where you find your **Brooks Brothers, Paul Stuart, Joseph A. Banks,** and more.

For those willing to go for the gusto and get in some discount shopping, see p. 306.

ALAN FLUSSER
3 E. 48th St., between Fifth and Madison aves. (Subway: E, V, or 6 to Lexington Ave./51st St.).

This is the most secret and sophisticated shop in New York, perfect for those gentlemen who think Polo is a cliché. The look is very traditional, expensive, and elegant in a European-American way, though the cut is strictly American. Flusser himself is the leading authority on the subject of men's fashion in New York, and is an expert on what goes with what. Pink socks are his trademark.

ALFRED DUNHILL
711 Fifth Ave., at 54th St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave.); 846 Madison Ave., at 69th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

The shop for the man who has everything, can't stand to shop, and wants to drop in at "his" store to fulfill his needs for suits, accessories, and smokes. Very much a private club.

Ascot Chang

7 W. 57th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

Ascot Chang is a famous institution in Hong Kong and, indeed, around the world. He is one of the world's best-known and best-loved shirt makers. Now he's come to New York (well, his son has) to open a more conveniently located shop for those who know how comfortable a custom shirt can be. Prices are higher than in Hong Kong, but not unreasonable—you'll pay about $50 for a custom shirt. (It's $30 in Hong Kong.) The shop has ready-made shirts, as well as made-to-measure; you can choose from about 2,000 fabrics. Women's shirts are not available ready-made as in Hong Kong, but can be custom-ordered. There are also suits, suspenders, ties, tennis togs, and the usual apparel for a well-dressed gent.

Barney's

660 Madison Ave., at 60th St. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave., or 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

The Madison Avenue men's store connects to the main part of the store on the first floor only (look for the doorway behind the fragrance counter). You then go up escalator after escalator to layers of men's tailoring, a boxing ring, various health and grooming services, and furnishings.

Beau Brummel

1113 Madison Ave., at 83rd St. (Subway: 4, 5, or 6 to 86th St.); other locations.

Born in Queens and now branching out to dress chic men everywhere, Beau Brummel specializes in European clothes that look good on thin men. **Hugo Boss,** the German line, is a big seller, but there's also **Gianfranco Ferré** and other big names. There are on-premises tailors for instant fixes, and, best of all, businessmen can make appointments for a room upstairs where—should they care to—they may eat and shop at the same

time. It's not cheap, but it is exclusive. There are a few stores dotted around town.

Bergdorf Goodman Man

745 Fifth Ave., at 58th St. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave., or 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

I don't know how this store has stayed in business: It is gorgeous and wonderful and special and filled with designer names but, alas, few customers. I think they should just call it a museum and charge admission. This is where the Masters of the Universe shop for the ultimate in power dressing for meetings, weekends, bedroom, boardroom, and even bathroom. Check out the cafe upstairs for a quick bite.

Brooks Brothers

346 Madison Ave., at 44th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, 7, or S to Grand Central/42nd St.); 666 Fifth Ave., at 54th St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave., or E, V, or 6 to Lexington Ave./51st St.).

It's not that I'm a traditionalist, a conservative dresser, or anything old-fashioned or uptight, but, I'm sorry to say, I don't get it when it comes to the new Brooks Brothers on Fifth Avenue. I mean, I understand it conceptually—a young, modern, hip store to lure in young customers and convert them to a brand that has a reputation for being old-fashioned. Great. It's just that the new store leaves me bored.

Go see for yourself. They carry men's and women's clothing, mostly for the workplace. Note that the clothes and the look are not the same as in the regular store on Madison Avenue, where, thankfully, little has changed.

You can tell a proper Brooks Brothers suit by the square boxy cut, which is why it's a uniform for a certain kind of businessman. Brooks Brothers does a steady business in these ultraconservative, always-correct suits, but this is actually a better store for sportswear and casual clothes. It actually does have women's and boys' departments as well. In fact, they've

beefed up the women's department in hopes of making a major statement in women's career clothing. There's now a factory outlet in Woodbury Common (p. 319).

Joseph A. Banks
366 Madison Ave., at 46th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, 7, or S to Grand Central/42nd St.).

This is a Boston retailer with a look that's very similar to Brooks Brothers, but with lower prices. The store isn't very big or splashy, but for conservative dressers looking for traditional clothing, this is almost a price war. The business includes a women's division, but women's clothing is not sold out of the Manhattan store; they will give you a catalog for women and petites if you ask.

Sulka
840 Madison Ave., at 70th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

Sulka offers suits and more casual clothes that possess European flair and tradition, but have enough edge and humor to convey that you are rich enough to be laughing all the way to the bank, impeccably assured and properly attired, of course.

PETS

Fetch
43 Greenwich Ave., between Charles and Perry sts. (Subway: 1 or 9 to Christopher St.).

This small but very, very chic boutique serves cat and dog owners. This is where I bought a Statue of Liberty dog toy and a polka-dot collar for my dog. Oh yes, I think I also bought pet aromatherapy, but don't tell anyone. It's between Sixth and Seventh avenues in the heart of the West Village.

PETCO
860 Broadway, at 17th St. (Union Sq.). (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, Q, W, or L to Union Sq.); other locations.

This is a superstore that sells pets (urrrgh) and tons of pet supplies; you can join their club and save 10% on some purchases.

SHERPA SHOP
400 Madison Ave., at 47th St., inside Crouch & Fitzgerald (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave., or E, V, or 6 to Lexington Ave./51st St.).

This is the place for fabulous doggy gear—totes and carrying bags and travel items; all at prices around $100 for big and fancy, and $50 for small and easy to schlep. Approved by airlines.

SEX TOYS

CONDOMANIA
351 Bleecker St., between W. 10th and Charles sts. (Subway: 1 or 9 to Christopher St.).

Believe it or not, this store has great gift items, even souvenirs from New York. While the main, uh, thrust, is on condoms, there are many unique and adorable gift items. "Plastics, Benjamin, plastics."

PLEASURE CHEST
156 Seventh Ave. S., between Charles and Perry sts. (Subway: 1 or 9 to Christopher St.).

I have been reporting this kind of stuff in the Hong Kong *Born to Shop,* so here goes: I got the listing from the TV show *Sex and the City*; so there.

SONIA RYKIEL
849 Madison Ave., at 70th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

This shop is mostly a fashion boutique, but following a trend begun by Sonia's daughter Nathalie, there are some fancy girl things meant to give lasting pleasure. Ask.

SHOPPING CENTERS

The big malls are in the metropolitan areas outside of Manhattan. In New York City, all you used to get in terms of a mall was several floors of retail space in an office complex—such as "The Market" at Citicorp or "The Atrium" at Trump Tower. Both are boring. Don't laugh, but the best of the mall-like spaces in Manhattan, up until very recently, was Rockefeller Plaza. That's all changed with the introduction of the mall at the Time Warner Center in Columbus Circle. Read on.

575

575 Fifth Ave., at 47th St. (Subway: B, D, F, or V to Rockefeller Center).

This is the poor person's Trump Tower, in the not-so-shabby neighborhood of Fifth Avenue and 47th Street. A small branch of **Ann Taylor** anchors this shopping plaza, and there's a New York Yankees team-merchandise store here as well.

Mitsuwa Marketplace

595 River Rd., Edgewater, New Jersey.

Okay, I admit it—this is a ringer. But it's so much fun that you must give it a little consideration. Mitsuwa Marketplace is in New Jersey, where everyone who craves a mall should be going. But wait, this is no mall or ordinary shopping center. It's a small strip village that is totally Japanese!

The largest store is a supermarket that includes eateries, and there's a row of stores selling cosmetics and gift items as well as clothes. The supermarket, which also sells some American items, has a combination of Japanese goods that you can't get

in too many other places. Definitely check out the section devoted to Japanese rice steamers, teapots, and so on. The packaging alone will make you nuts with glee. This is a shopping and artistic adventure if ever there was one.

You can drive from Manhattan (the complex is just about under the George Washington Bridge), you can take a ferry from Eleventh Avenue and 34th Street in Manhattan to the Port Imperial ferry terminal and get a taxi there, or you can take the Mitsuwa shuttle bus across the street from the north exit of the Port Authority Terminal on West 42nd Street.

Pier 17 Pavilion

Fulton and South sts. (South St. Seaport). (Subway: 1, 2, 3, or 9 to Fulton St.).

This is actually part of the South Street Seaport complex, and if you are just wandering happily around the area, you will probably discover it for yourself. But if you aren't paying much attention, or the crowds are too dense, you might not realize that besides the Faneuil Hall–like South Street Seaport complex, and the short stretch of street-level shops on Fulton Street, there is also an additional building along the water next to the lightship *Ambrose* that is really a mall on its own. It's complete with escalators and a branch store of many of the major chains in America. There's **Banana Republic, The Sharper Image, The Limited, The Limited Express, Foot Locker,** and others.

Rockefeller Center/Rockefeller Plaza

30 Rockefeller Plaza, Fifth Ave., at 50th St. (Subway: B, D, F, or V to Rockefeller Center).

On rainy days you can make your way across midtown underground if you know how to work the city of halls and shops that lie beneath Rockefeller Center. This is more than a mall; it's a village.

Besides fast-food restaurants and a few nice eateries, there are food markets, party stores, demi–department stores, candy shops, newsstands (with great magazine selections), and many service-related businesses—banks, a post office, travel agencies, Federal Express, and men who shine your shoes—all underground. Most of the stores are not anything you haven't seen before.

Aboveground is quite another story—one of New York's revolutions in retail happened right here. There's a tiny avenue of storefronts that leads to the Christmas tree and the ice-skating rink (in season) at Rockefeller Plaza, as well as a spacious branch of **The Metropolitan Museum of Art** gift shop.

Around the corner, on a tiny street called Rockefeller Plaza, there's a small branch of gourmet-food purveyor **Dean & Deluca,** which has a coffee bar and snacks to eat or take out. This place is especially hot since hanging out in front of the studio for the ***Today*** show at NBC has become such a popular activity.

The Trump Tower Atrium

725 Fifth Ave., at 56th St. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

The problem with the Trump Tower is that everybody wants to see it, but nobody thinks that they can afford anything there—so little actual shopping is going on while the mobs come and go. Donald Trump has gone on to other adventures, but still gets a lot of mileage out of his luxury tower, which has apartments in addition to the stores. The atrium space is Glitz City, with five levels (complete with lots of marble and brass) devoted to stores. Many stores are branches of famous names, such as **Asprey,** the London purveyor of fine goods. An escalator connects the floors, but you can also come up to each level in an elevator. Every visitor to New York should see this place. With the downsizing of the mean income of the neighborhood, many affordable stores have come to roost—including **NikeTown.**

SPECIAL SIZES FOR MEN

BARNEY'S
660 Madison Ave., at 60th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

Barney's has one of the most complete ranges of clothing sizes in New York. They also do alterations on the premises. The famous warehouse sale has plenty of selection in all size ranges too. See p. 74 for more about Barney's.

ROCHESTER BIG & TALL
1301 Ave. of Americas (Sixth Ave.), at 52nd St. (Subway: E, B, or D to 7th Ave.).

Hot brand names are carried in large and tall sizes here, though I must say that the prices make me shiver, and I found it a better value to have my husband's clothes made to order by our tailor in Hong Kong. But if you like to buy ready-made, there is a very good selection of quality looks and makes here.

SPECIAL SIZES FOR WOMEN

New York is one of the best cities in the world for specialty sizes; most of the department stores have made it their business to stock well-developed petite and plus-size women's wear. Even the store catalogs now feature garments available in a range of sizes. Most designers, retailers, and boutiques want to help you look as elegant as possible, no matter how big or small you may be. In fact, many established names, such as Anne Klein and Liz Claiborne (petites only), have petite or plus sizes, which are sold at their outlet stores.

If you can get in over a weekend, or can buy wholesale, try 498 Seventh Ave. (at 37th St.) for its showrooms for plus-size women. In addition to the listing below, try **Forman's Coats/Plus Sizes** at 78 Orchard St. (between Grand and Broome

sts.), and don't forget that any couture garment can be made to measure.

See the "Maternity" section earlier in the chapter for special sizes in that category.

Ashanti

872 Lexington Ave., at 65th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

This place has sizes 14 to 28 in everyday, business, casual, and dress-up styles. They host special 1-day events that highlight a specific look and show you how to put it together. Clothes tend to be colorful and exciting.

Avenue

711 Third Ave., at 46th St. (Subway: 6, V, or E to Lexington Ave./51st St.).

Those friendly folks who brought you The Limited and Express have opened this flagship store of Avenue, which sells the same inexpensive and hot fashions in plus sizes only. There are jeans, weekend clothes, and career clothes, as well as accessories and hosiery.

Plus Nine

11 E. 57th St., between Fifth and Madison aves. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

The store is upstairs, above Hermès, thank you very much. You buzz to be let in. There is a large selection of shoes, all high quality and from big-name firms—prices to match. I prefer to buy cheap shoes, but when I want true quality, I shop here. They have a standing selection of dressy shoes and shoes that can be specialty-dyed to match any outfit. Sizes begin at 9½ and go to 12. They do have seasonal sales.

Sigerson Morrison

28 Prince St., between Mott and Elizabeth sts. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.).

For the Manolo crowd; these catch-me-if-you-can high heels and mules go up to size 11.

SHOES

Shoe stores come in all flavors in Manhattan: Department stores (which usually have at least two different shoe departments), boutiques, teenage cheapie shoe stores (just take a look at W. 8th St. next time you are in the Village), and, of course, temples to the athletic shoe.

Entire clothing empires and fashion statements have grown from houses that originally manufactured just shoes and small leather goods (**Ferragamo, Gucci, Prada,** even **Bally**). Note that **Nordstrom,** the Seattle-based department store, is famous for its shoes; there are Nordstrom stores in the suburbs, and there are rumors of one coming to the East Side. I'll keep you posted. In the mean time, Nordstrom has a shoe shop online.

Big Names in Shoes & Leather Goods

Here are some of the best-known places to attire your feet in style:

BALLY
628 Madison Ave., at 59th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

BOTTEGA VENETA
635 Madison Ave., at 59th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

BRUNO MAGLI
543 Madison Ave., at 54th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

FENDI
720 Fifth Ave., at 56th St. (Subway: E, V, N, R, or W to 5th Ave.).

Ferragamo
665 Fifth Ave., at 53rd St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave.).

Gucci
685 Fifth Ave., at 54th St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave.).

Longchamp
713 Madison Ave., at 62nd St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

Louis Vuitton
1 E. 57th St., at Fifth Ave. (Subway: F to 57th St.); 116 Greene St., between Prince and Spring sts. (Subway: N or W to Prince St.).

Manolo Blahnik
31 W. 54th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave.).

Patrick Cox
702 Madison Ave., at 61st St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

Prada
45 E. 57th St., between Park and Madison aves. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.); 28 E. 70th St., between Madison and Park aves. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College); 724 Fifth Ave., at 56th St. (Subway: F to 57th St.); 575 Broadway, at Prince St. (Subway: W or R to Prince St.).

Stephane Kelian
158 Mercer St., between Prince and Houston sts. (Subway: W or R to Prince St.).

Stuart Weitzman
625 Madison Ave., at 59th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

Specialty Shoes

Belgian Shoes

110 E. 55th St., between Madison and Park aves. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St., or E, 6, or V to Lexington Ave./51st St.).

Belgian Shoes are handmade moccasins with a distinctive look that has made them a status symbol. These shoes fit differently from others, so you may be a different size. They either fit you or they don't—mine bit me—and the store will not take returns. Still, many swear by them.

Christian Laboutin

941 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

The darling of Paris tootsies has opened a teeny space in Manhattan where his wild and witty work is showcased. Don't panic if the shoes in a pair don't match—they aren't supposed to. The red sole is his trademark.

JPTod's

650 Madison Ave., at 61st St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

I'm not sure what was better, finding that Tod's fit me in America (in Italy I have to buy men's sizes) or finding the factory outlet store in Woodbury Common where the shoes I paid $278 for are marked down to $150. Oh well, when the shoe fits and all that.

Tod's are stylish flat and driving shoes; they are handmade and last forever. I would pay anything for mine because they are the only shoes I can walk all day in. They now have many styles, including their first pair of high heels and a line of sport shoes called Hogans. They also do handbags, and will even custom-engrave your own initials into your shoe. Hot damn.

Moderate to Mass Retail Big Names

You're sure to find something to suit you at one of these stores.

GALO
895 Madison Ave., at 72nd St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College; other locations.

NINE WEST
750 Lexington Ave., at 57th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, N, R, or W to Lexington Ave./59th St.); other locations.

UNISA
701 Madison Ave., at 63rd St. (Subway: F to 57th St., or 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

VIA SPIGA
765 Madison Ave., at 65th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College); 390 W. Broadway, between Broome and Spring sts. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.).

STATIONERY

NANCY COLLINS
73 Spring St., between Crosby and Lafayette sts. (Subway: 6 to Spring St.).

This graphic designer does old-fashioned engraving for the in crowd.

SMYTHSON OF BOND STREET
4 W. 57th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

This British hoity-toity firm has just opened in New York with extremely expensive products, some of them very imaginative.

STATIONERY JAMIE OSTROW
876 Madison Ave., at 72nd St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

For notepaper, invitations, and cards, this is one of the most chic addresses in town, although there is a bit of an attitude here. There are some ready-made notes, but mostly you order big and bold writing papers that are different enough and expensive enough to get other New Yorkers to notice your mail.

TEEN CLOTHING

Teen buys include vintage clothing and jeans, cutting-edge street fashion that must be cheap, and lots of accessories, including whatever shoes are of the moment. See the section "Hip & Hot" on p. 206. A few more affordable sources are below.

STRAWBERRY
Lexington Ave., at 42nd St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, 7, or S to 42nd St./Grand Central); other locations.

There are scads of these stores all over town; I usually visit the one at Grand Central Station. The clothes are very inexpensive and copy the looks made popular by the biggest names in fashion. Yes, Gucci.

URBAN OUTFITTERS
162 Second Ave., at 10th St. (Subway: L to Third Ave.); 360 Sixth Ave., at Washington Place (Subway: A, C, E, B, D, F, or V to West 4th St.); 628 Broadway, between Houston and Bleecker sts. (Subway: 6 to Bleecker St.); 2081 Broadway, at 72nd St. (Subway: 1, 2, 3, or 9 to 72nd St.).

Fans of the store **Anthropologie** will be pleased to know that it has a parent store, dating back to hippie days and now featuring a similar look—the rich hippie chic thing—for very

modest prices, making it a strong source for teens and tweens. There are lots of ethnic fashions and trendsetting styles here.

VINTAGE

Vintage clothing has never been more chic, thanks to a steady stream of celebrities who wear vintage—Julia Roberts at the Academy Awards anyone? Teens wear vintage jeans, models wear vintage slips, fashion editors wear vintage Pucci. In fact, vintage is so chic that Tiffany Dubin has become a New York celebrity (she's the founding director of Sotheby's fashion department) and vintage has become an auction staple. **William Doyle Auction House** has tried to corner the market, but the bigger-name auction people are indeed moving on in. See p. 328 for resale shops.

Funky Vintage

Darrow Vintage Clothing
7 W. 19th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 18th St.).

Designer and never-worn vintage is on tap here.

David Owens Vintage Clothing
154 Orchard St., between Stanton and Rivington sts. (Subway: J, M, or Z to Essex St., or F to Delancey St.).

Part of the new Lower East Side, this small store sells men's and women's vintage clothing from the 1940s through the 1980s. They also have some flea market locations.

Keni Valetni Retro-Couture
247 W. 30th St., between Seventh and Eighth aves., 5th floor (Subway: 1 or 9 to 28th St.).

Knock three times and whisper low, or call for an appointment: **✆ 212/967-7147.** This is a secret celebrity resource; serious collectors only.

STELLA DALLAS
218 Thompson St., between Bleecker and W. 3rd sts. (Subway: 6 to Bleecker St.).

Couture and name-brand clothes, especially from the 1930s and 1940s—a big celebrity source.

WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND
351 W. Broadway, between Broome and Grand sts. (Subway: W or R to Prince St.).

Not only is this source in the heart of SoHo, but it's a great place for spotting celebs who like to wear vintage clothes. The store has been so successful that it now has a wholesale showroom in TriBeCa and regular retail customers can also shop there; call for an appointment: **✆ 212/274-8340.**

Expensive Vintage: Men's & Women's

ROSE IS VINTAGE
96 E. 7th St., between First Ave. and Ave. A. (Subway: 6 to Astor Place).

Much Pucci.

RESURRECTION
123 E. 7th St., between First Ave. and Ave. A. (Subway: 6 to Astor Place).

More Pucci.

Chapter Nine

NEW YORK BEAUTY

Beauty may only be skin-deep, but it's a huge business in New York, as it is elsewhere in the world. Well-being has become the new mantra, especially in a city so filled with stress and anxiety.

Stores are battling with one another for the chance to carry the best and newest beauty brands—the odder the better. Day spas are everywhere in New York, be they famous names or neighborhood finds. French hairdressers are celebrities—actually, all hairdressers are celebrities. Hotels are competing to out-spa one another: The Plaza's spa now boasts Anne Semonin products from Paris, while The Mark offers Exhale, a well-being studio across the street from the hotel at 980 Madison Ave. Department stores have their own spas (one of the most exclusive is the Estée Lauder spa at Bloomingdale's). Television networks are making reality TV out of plastic surgery, everybody is on Atkins or the South Beach diet, and everyone goes to the gym. Quick—where's my spinning class?

No city—not even Paris—has the beauty energy that Manhattan now has thanks to stores and spas from **Avon** to **Bergdorf's** to **Bliss** to **LUSH** and beyond. Avon is more than just calling on New Yorkers (knock, knock, Avon lady!), they now have a fabulous spa just a few feet from Tiffany & Co. Downtown firms have branches uptown and in midtown (Bliss). And the fabulous LUSH now has a New York store. If you don't know about LUSH, read on, read on.

This chapter incorporates such diverse subjects as cosmetics, hairdressers, bath goods, perfumes, and even spa listings. So light up a Diptygue candle, rub a little Origins energizing oil on your brow, and hold the hair out of your eyes with a Frederic Fekkai elastic band (preferably one that says "Adorable"). Then take this book and head over to one of those upstairs manicure salons where you can get your nails done for $10 (add $2 tip, please) and read while your nails dry.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF BEAUTY

There are beauty businesses on just about every block of Manhattan; certainly every neighborhood has its own mom-and-pop shops, so to speak. The largest concentration of hip and hot sources is in SoHo, which many people in the industry have nicknamed the Lipstick District.

Upper Madison Avenue has several sources for beauty products, but it's best known for its string of very fancy pharmacies, which carry European brands. Midtown is dotted with the city's major department stores as well as flagships of many specialty stores, including **Banana Republic, Gap,** and **Benetton,** that all offer makeup brands. Midtown also has some of the small specialty multiples such as **Mary Quant, Crabtree & Evelyn, L'Occitane,** and so on, many of which began life in another country (although, despite what you may think, Crabtree & Evelyn is an American firm).

THE BIG NAMES IN BEAUTY

AVEDA
509 Madison Ave., at 53rd St. (Subway: E, F, or V to 5th Ave., at 51st St.); 456 W. Broadway, between Houston and Prince sts. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.).

This is a leading brand in aromatherapy, with hair care and beauty products made from all-natural ingredients. Excellent quality made this brand a cult fave. You can now find some of their products in drugstores, but the full range of items is sold only in their own shops.

Aveda Institute

233 Spring St., between Sixth Ave. and Varick St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to Canal St., or C or E to Spring St.).

Some of the best low-priced gifts in Manhattan ($10–$12) come from this tiny shop. The Aveda Institute, located in SoHo, is a spa and a store, and there are some small retail shops around town (listed above). Aveda is one of the leaders in aromatherapy in the United States, and aromatherapy treatments are on offer at the Institute in SoHo. The company has an array of products for men and women, including various hair cocktails that have been created especially for colored and problem hair. The line is used and sold in hair salons around the country, and sometimes you'll find a few items in a grocery store or drugstore. However, if you want to experience the full range of products, including candles, aromatherapy, and makeup, you should hit these stores in New York.

Avon Salon And Spa

Trump Tower, 725 Fifth Ave., at 56th St. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave., at 59th St., or 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave., at 59th St.).

Avon Salon and Spa is an important part of the New York beauty scene. This world-famous brand, which heretofore was only sold door to door rather than in stores, suddenly opened a glamorous New York spa and beauty center and introduced new products that are only sold here. It's been so successful that more freestanding stores and spas will be opening around America. The Aromatherapy Salt Glow here is fab. Prices are not the highest in the city, but they aren't budget either.

Skin So Soft

I feel compelled to tell international visitors about Skin So Soft, an Avon bath oil that is not usually sold in retail stores but only through private Avon distribution. Years ago, it was discovered that Skin So Soft helps to prevent bug bites, although the U.S. Food and Drug Administration won't touch this one with a 10-foot mosquito net. The demand for Skin So Soft in the United States is not as a bath or beauty product, but as protection from mosquitoes, black flies, and other annoying bugs. Anglers love it. A small bottle costs $4.

THE BODY SHOP

485 Madison Ave., at 51st St. (Subway: E, F, or V to Lexington Ave./51st St.); other locations.

Despite some financial woes, there are still plenty of branches of this popular English brand. I find that I'm tired of the line, but I still live for my Nut Body Butter (yes, I gave up mango for nut) and also use their line of nail products, good for dry cuticles. ***Note:*** Some Body Shop stores in the United Kingdom offer spa services; this trend will eventually come over to the United States.

H2O PLUS

650 Madison Ave., at 60th St. (Subway: N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

This is a Chicago firm that has taken the malls of America by storm; it's now so big that it has its own glitzy shop on Madison Avenue. H2O is bath-, spa-, and water-oriented—they even sell great kids' toys for the tub. They have great products for teens, kids, men, and even babies. If you aren't familiar with the line, it is refreshingly new and well priced, with many items in the $10-to-$15 range. The product range changes with the seasons, as if it were fashion—but I like the bath confetti

and the scrubs. Sometimes you can find the discontinued products at places like T.J. Maxx.

LUSH

Herald Center, 1293 Broadway, at 34th St. (Subway: 1, 2, 3, 9, N, R, W, B, D, F, V, or Q to 34th St.).

The good news: LUSH has arrived in the U.S. and has a store in New York. The bad news: It's in a mall across the street from Macy's and has been created for teenaged shoppers. But never mind. In the near future, there will probably be a LUSH on every other street corner.

If you are an old Born to Shop hand, you know that I have given a lot of page space to this British bath-and-beauty source, which offers such unique products and has such unique ways of marketing it. If you know nothing of LUSH, you are in for a big treat.

For the uninitiated, LUSH makes bath balls that snap, crackle, and fizz when you drop them in water, plus several natural beauty and care products, from shampoos to skin creams. They have two new scents, Prince (for guys, duh) and Ginger (which comes in male and female scents as well as bath products).

Everything is sold deli-style—the soaps are in loaves, the products are in refrigerator cases. Not every product is fabulous, but the presentation is adorable and the novelty factor is high. Great gift items, especially if you live in a town that has no LUSH. Now then, prices are about $4 per bath ball, which I find expensive, but call me irresponsible. Surely you are paying for the novelty factor and the razzmatazz, of which there is much.

Be sure to get a copy of the company newspaper *(LUSH Times)* and check out the website (www.lush.com) if there is no LUSH in your hometown.

Note that if you are familiar with the line in Canada and the United Kingdom, you already know the Canadian line has

a few differences from the British. The U.S. version of LUSH comes from Canada to meet demands of the FDA.

ORIGINS

402 W. Broadway, at Spring St. (Subway: E to Spring St.); Grand Central Station, at 42nd St. and Park Ave. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, 7, or S to Grand Central); other locations.

A division of **Estée Lauder,** Origins began by opening its own retail stores in Cambridge, Massachusetts, before moving into SoHo with a small store offering merchandise and treatments. Other shops are slowly opening around town, and the company now has its own spa at Chelsea Piers (at 23rd St. and the Hudson River).

While the line of natural-ingredient beauty aids, shampoos, aromatherapy treatments, and cosmetics is also sold in traditional department stores, this store has a wider selection and some products that are not available elsewhere.

I love this line; I often send out gifts from here—"Stress Buffer" is my fave, but I use "Jump Start" in my bath when I can afford it (at $25 for a bottle, it's a rather big splurge) . . . they are both aromatherapy products with a tingle that really seems worth the moola. Stress Buffer is soothing while Jump Start makes me giggle and sing in the shower.

I tried an eye shadow from the makeup line once but wasn't impressed; I'll stick to the aromatherapy products. Items (discounted, of course) are also available in limited range at the **Lauder** outlet store in **Woodbury Common.**

SEPHORA

555 Broadway, between Prince and Spring sts. (Subway: W or R to Prince St.); other locations.

Let's start with a short history of this French firm, which was getting innovative on its own and was then bought by LVMH, which turned it into a global power. They hit New York with more power than peroxide, first with a store in SoHo and then

another in midtown. The store in Rockefeller Center was 7,000 square feet larger than the flagship store in Paris, but couldn't make its numbers and closed. Never mind.

Sephora is neither down nor out. Five Sephora stores now thrive in Manhattan, and new branches are opening in other boroughs. This means that Sephora is like a neighborhood beauty supermarket, carrying many lines you've never heard of. Yummy.

They have brands created for black women, and even their own house brand. There is a no-gift-with-purchase policy at this store; gift-with-purchase is reserved for U.S. department stores only. They also refrain from spritzing you with perfume or, alas, giving you scads of fancy giveaways. They will, however, give you samples of anything you want to test if you ask, and these are not the kind of samples you get at department stores—fresh samples, straight from the jar, are put in containers for you to take home.

How to properly pronounce the name of the stores? Well, if you are American, you say Se-phor-*ah*; if you're French, it's *Seph*-or-ah. Go figure.

DEPARTMENT STORES

All department stores have enormous makeup-and-perfume departments, usually on the street floor. **Macy's** has recently expanded its makeup-and-perfume department—still on the ground floor—while **Bergdorf's** has taken the dramatic step of creating a totally new department, not on the ground floor but one floor below. **Barney's** has recently followed suit.

Saks prides itself on having the largest selection of perfume brands in the city, and carries many brands of perfume and makeup not found anywhere else. **Bloomingdale's** has one of the best makeup departments in the city and often has unusual and creative promotional events. They also strive to offer some unknown or little-known brands, such as Isabella Rossellini's **Manifesto** line of makeup.

It is the specialty stores, though, that really go for the gusto—**Takashimaya, Henri Bendel,** and **Barney's** all carry brands that might not be found elsewhere in the city, even at Sephora. Barneys has been the most competitive about finding new brands and garnering exclusive rights to them—their latest find is a line of skin care called **B. Kamins,** which has a Maple Treatment Cream for Extra Dry Skin that is supposed to be the last word. The line also specializes in aging skin and even has a Menopause Skin Cream.

MAKEUP BRANDS & STORES

I guess makeup must be almost as lucrative as perfume, since many stores have launched their own makeup brands in the last year or so. **Gap** started with bath and aromatherapy and is going into color cosmetics; so is **Banana Republic. Tommy Hilfiger** has a whole Tommy Girl line of makeup now, sold in his stores and in department stores such as Macy's.

At the other end of the, uh, spectrum, **Versace** went into color cosmetics before he died—that line is now carried in department stores and in Sephora. Many other big-name designers have color cosmetic lines, such as **Giorgio Armani** (the cosmetics are actually made by L'Oreal), **Calvin Klein** and, of course, **Yves Saint Laurent** (visit the renovated Yves Saint Laurent boutique to see designer Tom Ford's work). Can Donna Karan be far behind?

The stores and brands described below are specialists in the field of makeup, and many of them were created by makeup artists or models.

ALCONE

235 W. 19th St., between Seventh and Eighth aves. (Subway: C or E to 23rd St.).

This is a professional and theatrical makeup supply store. Because I come from Los Angeles, I am addicted to the **Tuttle**

brand sold here, not only for professional appearances and on-camera work, but also for those days when I need real help with my skin texture. The store also carries the **Trish McEvoy** line as well as **Il-Makiage,** an Israeli brand that has a sort of cult status in some circles because of its great color. Alcone sells various other professional brands of makeup as well as brushes and cases. These are products you can't find in department stores anywhere in the world; when you're doing Chelsea or lower Fifth Avenue, make a point to head over to this solid source. Your life will change forever.

Face Stockholm

687 Madison Ave., at 62nd St. (Subway: W or R to Lexington Ave./59th St.); 110 Prince St., at Greene St. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.).

Face comes from Sweden and began life as the makeup of choice for many a supermodel in 1980. The reason that the stars took to the brand is the range of colors that can be bought ready-made. There are more than 100 shades of nail polish and almost 200 shades of lipstick. Everything is out so you can test it. This was considered a cult brand, but it became so popular that they opened an uptown store and are also distributed through some of the fancy department stores.

5S

98 Prince St., between Mercer and Greene sts. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.).

The *S* stands for Shiseido, the Japanese firm that owns this concept line offering skin care, aromatherapy, bath products, and color cosmetics. Prices are moderate and the store is large, well organized, and fun to shop. Shiseido also has an information and product-testing center—it sells no products, but gives out samples—at **Shiseido Studio,** 155 Spring St., between West Broadway and Wooster Street. Call ✆ **877/99-STUDIO** for more information.

HELENA RUBINSTEIN
135 Spring S., between Mercer and Greene sts. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.).

Well, Madame Rubinstein is quite dead, but her line—which has flourished in Europe—has just been brought back to the United States. The small shop in SoHo helps spread the gospel by selling Rubinstein makeup and offering spa facilities. The store does a quickie "rush hour" beauty program for those in a hurry. For an appointment, call ✆ **212/343-9966.** The line is famous for vitamin C face-care products, and the lipsticks happen to be glorious—smooth and long-lasting. ***Note:*** An insider has told me that the firm will revamp its old-fashioned image and soon hit New York with a whole new attitude. Film at 11.

MAC
14 Christopher St., between Greenwich Ave. and Waverly Place (Subway: A, C, or E to W. 4th St.); 113 Spring St., between Mercer and Greene sts. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.); 1 E. 22nd St., at Fifth Ave. (Subway: N, B, W to 23rd St.).

This is a Canadian brand of makeup that is often worn by models. The line has became so enormously chic, and has gathered such a devoted following, that it was snapped up by **Estée Lauder.** MAC products are sold at **Bendel's,** on Fifth Avenue, in a totally renovated selling space, and at a few other specialty department stores, as well as at MAC stores (of course).

People say that the reason this line is so popular is that the makeup lasts longer on the face (and lips) than other brands; I think the reason it's so popular is that the prices are rather low and the image is very high. The colors are sublime; I buy a new eye shadow ($14) any time I'm down and out.

Bargain tip: This brand is *muuuch* cheaper than other major U.S. or European brands yet the quality is top-notch.

Ricky's: The Funky Beauty-Supply Store

A small but growing chain of beauty-supply stores that has reached cult status with many in the beauty biz; Ricky's has recently opened some uptown stores as the chain works its way into middle-class accessibility. Ricky's supplies stars, models, the rich and famous—this is the store where the movers and shakers of the beauty world hang out because it's a semi-professional source of supplies and goods.

Ricky's creates their own house line of products and sells wigs, hair accessories, and just about anything else that's fun, funky, and unusual, including body glitter in every color imaginable. This is a must-stop for Halloween products.

Ricky's also sells what the business calls "diverted goods." These are legally made name-brand products that the manufacturing company did not want sold at a discount but could not prevent from being released through a middleman. (Well, that's an oversimplification, but you get the idea—they're cheaper than you'd find elsewhere.)

Ricky's has stores at: 590 Broadway, between Houston and Prince streets, SoHo; 278 3rd Ave., at 22nd St.; 44 E. 8th St., at Greene Street; 1189 First Ave., between 64th and 65th streets; 988 Eighth Ave., at 58th St.; and at other locations. For a complete list, or to order their sometimes hard-to-find-otherwise products, go to www.rickys-nyc.com.

And yes, your grandmother is right—Ricky's is opening up in Miami Beach!

Madina Milano

151 Spring St., between W. Broadway and Wooster St. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.).

Madina is the first name of the Italian makeup artist at La Scala, the Milanese opera house. Her husband owns the factories that make most of the designer color cosmetics in the world, so it was no surprise when she opened a few of her own stores. What

is surprising is that the Madina store in Manhattan is far nicer than the one in Milan, and that the prices are the same as in Italy—low: Most items cost about $15.

My all-time favorite item is a palette of a dozen eye-shadow shades, packaged in a tin box for easy traveling. The pressed-powder products (eye shadows, powders, and blush) all have words printed on them, like "color," "love," or "peace."

Mary Quant

520 Madison Ave., at 53rd St. (Subway: E, F, or V to 54th St.).

If you're old enough to remember Mary Quant as the queen of Carnaby Street in the Swinging Sixties, you already know who she is and about her makeup. She's come back into style and has opened several makeup shops around the world; a few in London, one in Paris, and one in New York. The stores also sell some accessories. They say her forte is "color concepts," entire groups of makeup that are color-coordinated—pinks, browns, reds, and so on. While I am big on nostalgia, I tested a few items and wasn't that impressed. I list it for those of you who might want to know whatever happened to this brand or win big in a beauty trivia game.

Nars

580 Broadway, between Houston and Prince sts. (Subway: J, M, N, R, W, Q, Z, or 6 to Canal St.).

Nars is a French makeup artist who became famous in the U.S.; much of his makeup was revolutionary when it was introduced (he was the first to combine three types of soft makeup into the stick format). Nars is busy—he recently launched a beauty-product line, he has his own makeup book out, and now he has this salon, studio, and spa right near the Mercer Hotel. Many of his products are sold in department stores, but this Christian Liagre–designed space is worth a visit.

Shu Uemura
121 Greene St., between Houston and Prince sts. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.).

This Japanese line is carried in some department and specialty stores (**Takashimaya, Sephora**), so you needn't make the pilgrimage to this one—but it is great fun. There are more shades of cosmetics in this line than just about any other line in the world, and there are many pieces of equipment as well. You'll also find a range of skin-care products.

BATH & BODY STORES

Caswell-Massey
518 Lexington Ave., at 48th St. (Subway: E, V, or 6 to Lexington Ave./51st St.).

Resembling an old-fashioned British chemist shop (pharmacy), Caswell-Massey is best known for its private-label products, which have been going strong for hundreds of years now: George Washington even used their cologne (No. 6). There are a zillion different products; mail order is available.

Crabtree & Evelyn
Rockefeller Center, Fifth Ave., at 50th St., (Subway: B, D, F, or V to Rockefeller Center); 1310 Madison Ave., at 87th St. (Subway: 4, 5, or 6 to 86th St.); 520 Madison Ave., at 53rd St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave., at 51st St.).

I know this will come as a shock, but here goes: Crabtree & Evelyn is not a British firm, nor is it 100 years old. In fact, it was born in the era of the natural 1970s in New England and has become an international soap-and-jam empire based on the old English look. They have stores in Manhattan as well as in suburban malls everywhere. There are also factory outlet stores in Freeport, Maine, and Manchester, Vermont.

In my weaker moments, I get this line mixed up with Caswell-Massey; then I remember that George Washington used Caswell-Massey and Crabtree & Evelyn is the line that first seduced me into flavored/scented soaps. The history of my life can be traced through my changes in taste from avocado to almond scents in soaps and creams and lotions.

FRESH

1061 Madison Ave., at 80th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.); 57 Spring St., between Mulberry and Lafayette sts. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.); 388 Bleecker St., between Perry and W. 11th sts. (Subway: 6 to Bleecker St.).

This Boston business has invaded New York, opened in Chicago, and just gone international. This is one of those lines that was considered a cult must-have, although I find the prices to be somewhat staggering.

The products are somewhat farm-inspired, made with milk, eggs, honey, and so on. There are sugar cube fizz balls for the bath that are a bit pricey but heavenly, and the body salt scrubs may actually be worth $40! New Yorkers from the *Sex and the City* set really eat this stuff up.

L'OCCITANE

1046 Madison Ave., at 80th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.); 510 Madison Ave., at 52nd St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave., at 51st St.); 146 Spring St., at Wooster St. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.); 247 Bleecker St., between Carmine and Leroy sts. (Subway: 1 or 9 to Christopher St.); other locations.

This is one of my favorite French brands in America, offering perfumes, aromatherapy, soaps, candles, incense sticks, color makeup, and body and face products from the south of France.

Honestly, I'm not certain how to classify this one; they do it all: In addition to all the products mentioned above, they sell bedding, bathroom products, home sprays and scents, and travel kits. If you don't know this brand, please sniff your way over and inhale deeply.

Note that the firm is connected by lineage and some moneymen to **Olivier & Co.,** an olive-oil firm, so the stores are often next door to one another. Olivier & Co. sells olive oil and olive oil–based beauty products. L'Occitane has a mail-order catalog (✆ **888/623-2880**).

LUSH
See listing on p. 237.

PERLIER/KELEMATA
436 W. Broadway, at Prince St. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.).

This is a branch of an Italian firm, even though Perlier sounds French. They have a cosmetics line (Harmonia) as well as bath goods (Perlier) and Kelemata skin treatment products, which happen to be great. While the Perlier line is best known for its honey products, the ones made with vanilla are also sublime.

WHOLE BODY
260 Seventh Ave., at 25th St. (Subway: C or E to 23rd St.).

Check out the **Whole Foods** organic market and then pop into **Whole Body** for natural bath, body, and beauty products. Some are a tad underground, while others are famous in Europe and otherwise hard to find in New York, like **Dr. Hauschka,** a German line that is the all the rage in London. (Try the rose oil on your cuticles.)

PHARMACIES WITH A TWIST

BOYD'S
655 Madison Ave., at 60th St. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave., at 59th St.).

Boyd's is a cornucopia of delight. The store has a remarkable selection, including many European brands not commonly

found in the United States. The prices are high, but boy is it fun to browse here.

This place is almost a department store of health and beauty aids, hair gizmos, headbands, accessories, perfumes, and every imaginable beauty product—which you can play with and test to your heart's content. This is my favorite for wandering around dazed.

CLYDE'S

926 Madison Ave., at 73rd St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

This is an uptown and slightly more posh and elegant version of Boyd's (described above); I like how fancy it is. The store is spacious and low-key, and will appeal to those who don't like to search every nook and cranny to find what they want. See p. 117 for more information.

CONCORD CHEMIST

425 Madison Ave., at 49th St. (Subway: B, D, F, or V to Rockefeller Center).

This is an unusual drugstore: They have many Euro brands of makeup and beauty treatments, some accessories, and a few brands of gunks and goops that are hard to find or that you may have never heard of. I used to work in the office building above the store, so I have been dropping in for years (it's near **Saks** and Burger Heaven) and working with a woman named Ana Medina for skin care. She gives me zillions of samples and tells me to test them and then come back to purchase—it's a soft sell, which I appreciate, and the brands she has are not found elsewhere.

JANET SARTIN INSTITUTE

500 Park Ave., at 58th St. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave., at 59th St.).

Before the term "day spa" was common, in fact, before I even had blemishes, Janet Sartin was one of the most serious

The Doctor Is In

If you've ever gone to a dermatologist, you know that many skin doctors peddle their own goop. This trend has advanced into serious marketing, so that there are now several "medical brands" available on shelves throughout the city, usually in the more esoteric drugstores and beauty suppliers. Check out brands such as Dr. Kamins, Dr. Brandt, or N.V. Perricone MD. Dr. Michelle Copeland is a plastic surgeon who trained at Harvard; if you don't find her brand on shelves, you can call ✆ 866/833-SKIN. ***Note:*** **Dr. Hauschka** is a terrific brand (it's German), but is not really a medical brand.

specialists in skin care; call ✆ **212/751-5858** for an appointment. The products are sold from the shelves; no need for an appointment to stock up.

KIEHL'S

109 Third Ave., at 13th St. (Subway: L, N, Q, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Union Sq.).

This pharmacy is old-fashioned in the most yummy sense of the word; you can actually feel the tradition in this store. Kiehl's offers the kind of ambience other stores can only try to copy. Their specialty is their own products, created from knowledge based on hundreds of years of customer feedback and satisfaction. Okay, so the store is only 150 years old; you get the point.

Kiehl's goods have become the rage in Europe, so they make excellent gifts for international visitors to take home or for U.S. or Canadian travelers to bring overseas. These are the sort of "in" products that show people that you know about the very best in beauty and body and face care. Some of the uptown department stores and European-style drugstores in Manhattan also sell this line.

Zitomer

969 Madison Ave., at 76th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

Larger and more extensively packed than Boyd's, Zitomer is a virtual department store of great drugstore stuff—they even sell clothing and have a doggie boutique. The store is a bit over the top for me, but it's great fun for the first timer. The merchandise is very similar to what's on the shelves at Boyd's (European brands of toothpaste, deodorant, hair spray, bath bubbles, soap, wrinkle cream), but whereas Boyd's has greater hair-accessory and perfume selections, this store specializes in hard-to-find brands and European specialties for skin care. Zitomer is possibly more fun than Boyd's—it's twice the size and now has a second store next door. The owners have a clear understanding of who their shoppers are, so they have enlarged and expanded and fooled around with the merchandise mix so that you will find anything you need for a chic life of beauty on the road or on Upper Madison.

PERFUME & SCENT SHOPS

All department stores, many discounters, and many specialty stores sell perfumes. The listings below are specialty houses known for their own lines of scents.

Caron

675 Madison Ave., at 60th St. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave., at 59th St.).

Although nothing will ever be as *charmant* as Caron's store on avenue Montaigne in Paris, this new store is great fun, as are the Caron scents, which are largely unknown in America. I wear the one that was created for the first "air hostesses" (in 1947); it's spicy. I used to wear the old version of Fleur de Rocaille, which is more floral. The fragrances all have a lot of history; many are attached to celebrity names. The brand is

considered very sophisticated—so sophisticated, in fact, that regulars bring their own perfume bottles in for refills. If you don't want to be part of the wave of commercial scents being spritzed about and inserted into products, then visit Caron for an old-world alternative. All fragrances come only in perfume, nothing is diluted with *eau*.

Chanel

15 E. 57th St., between Fifth and Madison aves. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

Yeah, yeah I know: Chanel is sold in every department store in America. But there is a tiny line of fragrances (about five of them), created by Coco Chanel herself, which are only sold in Chanel boutiques around the world. I know this because I wear one of them, *Cuir de la Russie* (Russian Leather), which is spicy and a tad heavy, but I am a woman of a certain age and it's a heady scent.

Creed

9 Bond St., between Broadway and Lafayette St. (Subway: 6 to Astor Place); 897 Madison Ave., at 72nd St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

Creed was an English perfumer in Victorian times; the company then relocated to Paris and became a French perfume house. They are extremely exclusive; few department stores carry the line, although Barney's has some of the scents. There are fragrances for men and woman, and many were created for royalty or celebrities. When Prince Rainer wanted Grace Kelly, his bride, to have a scent for their wedding day, Creed created it.

The SoHo store is worth the trip for the decor and ambience alone. Note that Creed has just released a range of fragrances (available in some department stores) called 09Bond (the address of one of the shops), which is an American line named after various U.S. cities. This is not yet sold in Europe

and therefore makes a great gift to takes overseas, although it does cost about $90 a bottle.

JO MALONE

Flatiron Bldg., 949 Broadway, at 22nd St. (Subway: R or W to 23rd St.).

This British cult scent heroine merged into the **Estée Lauder** empire in order to go global; her first store in America rests between an **Origins** store and a **MAC** cosmetics store—two of Lauder's other brands. I mention all this because it was actually hard for me to find the shop; it is in the Flatiron Building but proudly faces Broadway rather than Fifth Avenue.

Malone does not do color cosmetics (yet); she does body treatments, bath products, perfumes, and home scents such as linen spays, candles, and potpourri. The grapefruit group of products is a nice wakeup call or summer scent. I prefer the "Mandarine" scent, which the Mandarin Oriental hotels use as their amenity soap. There's a gift box of tiny travel-size plastic bottles of bath gel that make a great gift for yourself or others. Prices are so high here that it's a shame that Malone doesn't produce smelling salts. Still, this is the ultimate New York status gift or insider name to drop. ***Note:*** The products cost less in London.

PENHALIGON

870 Madison Ave., at 70th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./ Hunter College).

This is an English brand that's now expanding around the world. Penhaligon is old-fashioned yet classical, with scents for men and for women; a cult classic. The names of the scents sound like they belong in a Jane Austen novel. What's interesting is that the firm makes colognes, which are water- and alcohol-based, but many people claim they have long-lasting powers. Actually, my favorite products come from their new leather-goods line of accessories for travel, bath, and bed.

HAIRSTYLISTS

Frederic Fekkai
15 E. 57th St., near Fifth Ave. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

Okay, read my lips: Fred-er-reeeek, that's how we say it. If you say Fred-rihck, you give yourself away as a hair novice. This multifloor salon offers the works: hair, beauty, and spa treatments, plus a cafe and retail products. I don't find it very calming, but it sure is fascinating. Even though the space is painted in colors that you'd find in the south of France, and even though it boasts an indoor fountain, it's the beautiful women, the models, and the photographers that I find so distracting. It's a real trip.

All beauty and spa services are offered; I got hooked on a lavender rubdown here. It was the day I saw the late Herb Ritts having a pedicure. Call ahead (✆ **212/753-9500**) for an appointment—it takes about 3 months to get the master himself to give you a haircut and thus, a new identity.

Fekkai has expanded into accessories such as headbands (adorable) and handbags (very chic), and has recently written a book. He has a freestanding accessories store at 600 Madison Ave., near 57th Street.

Jean-Claude Biguine
1177 Avenue of the Americas (Sixth Ave.), at 45th St. (Subway: B, D, or V to Rockefeller Center); 450 Park Ave. S., at 30th St. (Subway: 6 to 33rd St.); 925 Lexington Ave., at 68th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College); other locations.

The theory here is French class that's accessible to the American masses. This is a French chain of hair salons; just walk in for a *coupe* (cut), *le brushing* (styling), or whatever Madame needs, for a minimal fee; appointments are optional. Biguine is a bigwig (yuck, yuck) in France, but only has a few salons

here in America; he also has a new cosmetics line in France that I hope will come to the United States soon.

Oscar Blandi
Plaza Hotel, Fifth Ave., at 59th St. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave., at 59th St.).

If you thought no one important ever went to a hairstylist in a hotel, then you haven't met Oscar Blandi or seen his fancy digs in the landmark Plaza Hotel. Nor have you read his client roster, a virtual who's who from *InStyle* magazine. Blandi can create a custom hairstyle for you, but it will cost a few hundred bucks. Obviously, other members of his team charge less.

NAIL SALONS

Nail salons are not only located on every other corner in Manhattan, but are also found upstairs in town houses as well, where real estate prices are slightly less expensive. In these places, you can usually get a manicure and pedicure in the $20 range. But there's also a lot of power nail-painting going on, and Ladies Who Lunch would not be caught dead in one of those cheapie neighborhood nail bars; these ladies have their own favorite spots, usually run by nail experts. Many spas, especially hotel spas, also offer nail services.

Note, of course, that a manicure is no longer always just a manicure—many women in New York get some sort of wraps, gels, or tips added to their nails, or have what's called "a glue manicure" (glue is applied to the nails to strengthen them).

There are two chains of mass-market nail spas taking over New York: I tested a branch of **Bloomies** (no relation to the department store, Bloomingdales) and adored it, although there was a bit of a high-pressure sell in terms of products and services. I had just arrived in New York and my ankles were swollen from the flight, so I got a manicure, a pedicure, and

some sort of leg and foot spa treatment that was heavenly, even though I think it cost about $65 . . . just for the feet!

My friend Dorie, a journalist, has suggested I skip **Pinky's,** another chain of nail salons with spa services—she had two very bad manicures there. Note that the first time I saw a Pinky's (they are all over New York), I thought the typeface read DKNY.

BUFFSPA
754 Fifth Ave., at 58th St., Bergdorf Goodman (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave., at 59th St.).

I'm sorry, but if this isn't a scene from TV's *Sex and the City,* I don't know what is—socialites and celebs gossiping while getting their toenails painted. Of course, you can have more than a pedicure, but to me, you go here for the scene or to be seen. To book, call ✆ **212/753-7300.**

ELLEGEE
22 E. 66th St., between Fifth and Madison aves., upstairs (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

This source comes from Janet, who has great nails and insists on healthy treatments, and on patience and attentiveness from the staff. The price is steep ($35 for a manicure), but the location is deep in Madison Avenue shopping country and the services are top flight. To book, call ✆ **212/472-5063.**

HAVEN
150 Mercer St., between Houston and Prince sts. (Subway: A, C, or E to Canal St.).

Another SoHo treat—this spa offers what they call the Mythic Manicure, which costs $25 and lasts for 2 weeks. To book, call ✆ **212/343-3515.**

RESCUE AROMATHERAPY NAIL SPA
21 Cleveland Place, at Kenmare St. (Subway: 6 to Prince St.).

This SoHo nail salon is expanding, and now has a large client list of celebs that come for the natural aromatherapy treatments. A basic manicure is $16, which, by New York standards, is a good price. This is not one of those salons that specialize in gimmick nails; this is a serious treatment center. To book, call **✆ 212/431-3805.**

SPAS

The day-spa business has become so huge that it's hard to know a department store from a spa from a beauty salon these days. **Frederic Fekkai** (p. 253) actually has full spa services; I went for the fake tan once. **Macy's** (p. 185) has opened a spa area, and **Avon Salon and Spa** (p. 235) offers a full-service spa. Many hotels have had spas for a while now—some even offer special jet-lag or shopping treatments to rejuvenate you. The Aveda Institute and Avon Salon and Spa began life as spas and have expanded to sell various products, so they can be found in other sections of this chapter.

AVEDA INSTITUTE
233 Spring St., between Sixth Ave. and Varick St. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.).

See p. 235 for more information. **✆ 212/807-1492.**

AVON SALON AND SPA
Trump Tower, 725 Fifth Ave., at 56th St. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave., at 59th St., or 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave., at 59th St.).

See p. 235 for more information. **✆ 212/755-AVON.**

BLISS
568 Broadway, at Prince St. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.); 19 E. 57th St., between Fifth and Madison aves., upstairs (Subway: N, R, or W to 57th St.).

Bliss may be responsible for starting the day-spa craze in New York. The firm became so hot that it was gobbled up by LVMH, which is why one of their locations is in the Louis Vuitton building on East 57th Street, almost next door to Chanel and Frederic Fekkai. The business has also morphed itself into a catalog of products.

Bliss has clean, modern packaging and offers a look and feel of practical luxury—you feel like you are taking care of yourself, not wasting money or splurging on something silly. The environment is luxe but the emphasis is not on luxury but well-being. If you are looking for just the right gift for a bride, or a thank-you to an overworked friend or mom, the gift certificates are considered, uh, bliss. For booking, call ✆ **212/219-8970.**

Clarins

1061 Madison Ave., at 80th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

Face and body treatments are available here, at the latest of the store-cum-spa set, where all the products are from the famed French brand. There is a special program for men. For reservations, call ✆ **212/734-6100.**

Origins Spa

The Sports Center, Chelsea Piers, Pier 60 (Subway: C or E to 23rd St.).

I don't know that I'd go all the way over here just for a rubdown, but it's a great place to know about if you're in this neck of the woods and love Origins as much as I do. This place was created to serve the clients who use the sports facilities here. Call ✆ **212/336-6780** for an appointment.

Qiora

535 Madison Ave., at 54th St. (Subway: E, F, or V to Lexington Ave./51st St.).

Located right in midtown for the business crowd, this spa is also well positioned for visitors and shoppers alike. Owned by **Shiseido,** the treatments combine beauty with instruction on relaxation techniques. Call ✆ **212/527-0400** for an appointment.

Chapter Ten

NEW YORK HOME

HOME SWEET APARTMENT

For those with gobs of money, it's not hard to get in touch with the great names in interior design and to create digs that should be (and perhaps will be) featured in *Architectural Digest*. I'm usually looking for something less stellar. I did my first apartment in New York with castoffs found at curbside. I still hate to pay full retail price—especially when it comes to home furnishings and decorative items. In fact, I buy a lot of the things for my house in Provence at **T.J. Maxx** and bring them back to France. I'll search out a Target in any suburb and I *loooove* Kmart style for basics.

If you're going high-end, toss this book aside and ask your secretary to dial a designer. If you do your own decor, are always looking for a deal, like to mix mass and class, read on for my suggestions and those of Paul Baumrind, *Born to Shop New York*'s correspondent, and a real live interior designer.

TO THE TRADE

If you are seriously planning a renovation or refurbishment, you must know that the three little words most important to you are no longer "I love you" (or, "You look younger"), but "To the trade."

"To the trade" signifies that the business will deal only with the design trade; those designers who wish to work with such firms must register and fill out documentation with their financial and credit history, thus opening an account.

In short, you can try printing up business cards that imply that you are a designer, which may get you into a showroom, but chances are that you won't be able to actually do business with the house until you open an account and establish credit. This can be very tricky, moderately tricky, or easy as pie; it varies from house to house and is usually worth a shot. Since business is worse than crummy these days, there is more latitude, except with the biggest, most snobby houses.

Once you are able to "buy direct," as they say on the street, you will learn two new favorite words: net and gross. Net is the wholesale price. Gross is what the designer will charge the customer. If you are your own only client, you'll save the difference between net and gross. If you get these two terms mixed up (I do), you will never pass yourself off as a pro when you work the showrooms.

Remember, you still owe the tax man, so don't forget to pay up even when you buy wholesale.

Showroom Etiquette

Assuming you are faking your way through this, we have some step-by-step instructions. First of all, if you do have a friend who is legit, or at least knows the ropes better than you do, you should make a run with her or him so that you know how to behave and aren't a nervous Nellie.

In order to make a go of it on your own, please remember:

- **No showroom in the world wants to do business with tourists just in for the day.** Wear proper business clothing; have well-made business cards; carry a shopping bag, tote, or attaché case for samples; and do not carry a diaper bag. A Polaroid camera is actually okay, as is a digital. Design showrooms will not let you take pictures, but antiques showrooms will.
- **Be warm, friendly, confident, and above all, professional.** The regulars are well known. You are a newcomer. Walk to the desk, introduce yourself, offer a business card and a handshake (when appropriate), and sign in (if indicated). Explain your needs: "I have a client who asked me to take a look at your line. She's just wild about . . .".
- **Take the provided paper and pencil and write down style names and numbers as you work the boards of samples.** When you go to the desk (this is just like the library), ask about the policy on taking out samples. You will most likely have to register and establish credit to take out a sample. Find out when the sample is due back. Return it on time.
- **Ask about delivery dates.** Contrary to popular belief, a showroom is not a warehouse. The fabric or wallpaper you want is not on a shelf in the back somewhere. It may not even exist yet. Standard delivery is 6 weeks. Some showrooms take less time, and some take more—much more. You are expected to pay for half of the order when you "write paper" (place the order) and then pay the remaining portion upon delivery.

SPECIAL PROMOTIONS & EVENTS

Aside from the goings-on in the D&D (design and decoration) industry, there are a lot of tabletop people who are actually in

the gift industry or other aspects of design. Many of them hold sample sales that are announced in the *S&B Report* (p. 326), the *New York Times,* or wherever. On weekends before Christmas, a large number of warehouses are open to the public.

REGULAR RETAIL

There's hardly such a thing as regular retail anymore, and the days when a family walked into B. Altman and chose a living-room set are as dead as B. Altman. Nowadays, most department stores do not even have furniture departments.

Mass merchants who offer style and value have inherited the "regular retail" home-furnishings business: **Ikea, Pottery Barn,** and **Crate & Barrel.** Terrence Conran is here with **The Terrence Conran Shop,** located under the 59th Street Bridge.

Many Manhattanites are willing to drive to the suburbs to get even better buys; Ikea (in Elizabeth, New Jersey) is thriving . . . as are out-of-the-way outlet stores.

ABC Carpet & Home has become one of the few full-service home-furnishing stores in the city. It's actually one of Manhattan's "showplace" stores, and it's an absolute shopping dream. If New York shopping was the Westminster Dog Show, this store would place for best in breed. If you haven't seen ABC in a while, know that they have added a definite Zen twist over the past year. ABC has created a renaissance in the neighborhood around them, and the concept of a full-service home-furnishing store has actually spread to other neighborhoods of New York.

Most big-name American designers—and many European ones—have gone into the lifestyle business, as have some of the chains. **Banana Republic** has a home-decor department downstairs in its Rockefeller Center store, and both **Donna Karan** and **Calvin Klein** sell home style on Madison Avenue. The **Versace** people and the **Dolce & Gabbana** boys have been doing decorative arts for several years now.

There are design concepts that come from Europe and find a place in America; there are copycat firms that charge a lot of money for newly made antiques; there's style, there's wit, there's bad taste—all easily accessible, some easily affordable. But more important, now there's good taste that's affordable. And New York will never be the same.

TRENDSETTERS IN HOME STYLE

ARMANI CASA
97 Greene St., between Prince and Spring sts. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.).

I wasn't expecting too much from Armani Casa; after all, I'd seen the flagship store in Milan and wasn't impressed with that. But this one is terrific! And don't let the smallish entryway fool you—the store is very deep and also has a downstairs level. The style here is Zen—not quite Asian, but very minimalist. You can buy similar dishes for $2 each in Vietnam, but for some reason you have to pay $50 each here. And they are so simple that this price seems worthwhile. Besides dishes, there's furniture, and now bedding. Armani Casa bedding is also sold at Bloomingdale's on the seventh floor.

BAKER
129-33 Hudson St., at Beach St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to Franklin St.).

This large showroom, located in trendy TriBeCa, sells traditional American furnishings. I prefer the stuff sold upstairs—it's more solid and traditional as opposed to the new and more edgy designs on the ground floor.

B&B ITALIA
150 E. 58th St., between Lexington and Third aves. (Subway: N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to 59th St.).

Modern and moderne, and as the name says, Italian.

FELISSIMO
10 W. 56th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves. (Subway: E, F, or V to 5th Ave., at 51st St.).

Felissimo takes up an entire town house just west of Fifth Avenue, and sells artsy-fartsy gifts and tabletop goods in the most sumptuous, gorgeous, elegant surroundings in town. This place is a gallery of good taste. The dishes are somewhat in the same style as those at Armani Casa, and there's writing paper, bed linens, candles, relaxation therapies, and much more. It's a pleasure to indulge your senses in this tranquil space and to get lost in the joy of shopping. Try their new scent.

PEARL RIVER
477 Broadway, at Broome St. (Subway: A, C, or E to Canal St.).

I'm not sure that you can call this store trendsetting; it features all sorts of Chinese-style products, many of which are now considered chic and fun decor additions. This stuff has been around forever, though Pearl River itself has recently moved. The Mao Communist souvenirs are considered cutting edge. You could get inspired here.

RALPH LAUREN
867 Madison Ave., at 72nd St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.); 381 W. Broadway, at Broome St. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.).

There isn't a bigger influence on modern mass design in America than Ralph Lauren and his English old-world, old-style country looks. While much of what Ralph does is actually derived from historical pieces in museums and great homes, when he executes a design, he sets trends that the rest of America wants to follow.

To see it all in action, stop by the store in the old Rhinelander mansion on Madison Avenue. There are also Ralph Lauren bedroom boutiques in a few department stores and at **ABC Carpet & Home.** Much of the big-time home-furnishings line is

available to the trade; to get the bed linens at discount, try any of the Ralph Lauren factory outlet stores outside of the city. See the "Factory Outlets" section in chapter 11 for more information.

Shabby Chic

83 Wooster St., between Prince and Spring sts. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.).

If you adore comfy, oversized, upholstered furniture that could have come straight from Grandma's (or the attic), then you've come to the right source. This newly made oversized (even Grandma's stuff wasn't this stuffed) furniture is setting the design industry on its ear. The furniture pieces are not inexpensive, and some of your friends may be amazed that you paid a fortune for mismatched faded chintz or a giant cabbage-rose couch complete with slipcovers and throw pillows. The business has become so successful, however, that there are now showrooms in most major U.S. cities.

Takashimaya

693 Fifth Ave., at 54th St. (Subway: E, F, or V to 5th Ave., at 51st St.).

I have raved in other parts of this book about Takashimaya, the elegant Japanese department store. Poke into the atrium, take a look at the French florist booth, and go upstairs (make the time)—the displays are beautiful and the style is far more country French than Japanese. And, yes, there are a number of affordable items. Well, a few, anyway.

Tiffany & Co.

727 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

If you're thinking breakfast at Tiffany's, then you should be thinking about the trendsetting tabletop designs that this store has become famous for. In fact, Tiffany's has even published a book on their table settings. The store has moderately priced

items, so that while the reputation is upscale, you will find that just about anyone can afford something or other here.

The trends that Tiffany's continues to set always involve an eclectic side; learn how to mix your flea market finds with Tiffany delights for the perfectly groomed table.

THE COMPLETE LOOK FOR THE HOME

JONAL
17 E. 67th St., between Fifth and Madison aves. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

This place is very English—Nina Campbell, in fact—and very pulled together in a comfy way, with fabrics, beds, and everything else you might need, right down to the finishing touches. The whole thing is sumptuous. And expensive.

MOSS
146 Greene St., between Houston and Prince sts. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.).

The store sells a little of everything, with an emphasis on gift items and home style in the quirky and moderne vein. The 7,000-square-foot store is fun, but I don't live and die by Philippe Starck lemon squeezers, though others do. This place is somewhat like an art gallery—many products have either an edge or black humor in the subtext.

PEARL RIVER
477 Broadway, at Broome St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to Canal St.).

If your total look is Chinese, or Zen, try Casa Armani or this place, Pearl River—a Chinese department store and emporium of cheap chic. ***Note:*** Pearl River is in new digs, so if you remember the old store, deeper in Chinatown, know that this one is the new, improved, SoHo version. See p. 264.

William Wayne
850 Lexington Ave., at 64th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

This shop started out downtown as a funky little resource, turned rich and famous (I even saw them on CNN), and now has two stores on Lexington Avenue. One of the stores features wonderful accessories and tabletop items (Paul adores this store because he says it reminds him of my living room). That's a polite way of saying that this store is crammed with fun junk. Many items have monkey or animal themes. The other shop has more of a country look and features garden and outdoor furniture. This is one of those New York cutie-pie stores that all the magazines feature, and that everyone oohs and aahs over, and that you just have to see, even if you don't buy anything.

MASS PLUS CLASS

Perhaps the biggest change on both the social and design scenes in New York is that good design at low prices has not only become readily available, but is almost de rigueur in every economic bracket.

ABC Carpet & Home
888 Broadway, at 19th St. (Subway: R or W to 23rd St.); 20 Jay St., Brooklyn (Subway: A or C to High St.).

If you've ever doubted that retail is theater, you haven't been to ABC Carpet & Home. The store is composed of two retail spaces across the street from one another; the main space is the more dramatic. The store has changed a lot in recent years and is far more Zen than cluttered now—it's still fun, but you can feel the changes.

ABC sells a whole lot more than carpet—they sell a lifestyle look. The street-level floor is almost an emporium of goods,

with items for the home, for kids, and for gifts, and even an **Origins** boutique. Upstairs, there are carpets on one floor, sheets on another, and fabrics on another. The thought that this is a discounter pervades, although frankly, I don't think they know the meaning of the word discount here (though they have a great outlet store in the Bronx). They do, however, know the meaning of the words style, selection, and serendipity.

The new DUMBO store proves the power of Brooklyn.

Bed Bath & Beyond

620 Avenue of the Americas (Sixth Ave.), at 19th St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 18th St.); 410 E. 61st St., at First Ave. (Subway: N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

This chain was one of Manhattan's first superstores, and the two stores are crammed, and I mean *packed*, with bath goods, sheets, bath towels, kitchen items, and everything in the world you can imagine. The New York stores are not unlike the suburban branches of this national chain, except that they're even larger and grander. You've gotta see these places to believe them.

First-time apartment dwellers: This is a major resource.

Bombay Company

1062 Third Ave., at 63rd St. (Subway: N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

This is a catalogue firm that now has stores all over the U.S.—mostly in malls. The Manhattan store gives you a chance to cash in on the look—not Indian as the name would imply but sort of colonial-traditional. It's all reproduction and is unlikely to be the kind of thing you'd pass on to your children—but there are some nice pieces and the prices aren't too bad.

Crate & Barrel

650 Madison Ave., at 59th St. (Subway: N, R, W to 5th Ave., at 59th St.); 611 Broadway, at Houston St. (Subway: 6 to Spring St.).

Chicago is no second city when it comes to exporting its most famous store to Madison Avenue. Although I have trouble deciphering the difference between merchandise from **Pottery Barn** and Crate & Barrel, there's no question that Crate & Barrel has taken Madison Avenue by storm and created almost as much excitement as Barney's did when it opened up here a few years back.

After pondering it, I find the Crate & Barrel look is a little more upmarket and less first-apartment than Pottery Barn. Everything is chic but mass-produced. Items are sold at fair prices, from plates to place mats to sofas and gardening tools. The look tends to be clean and lean without embellishment—just old-fashioned, simple design in the right colors for the moment.

There are two floors filled with a total lifestyle look that seems perfectly designed for the places that New Yorkers inhabit (be they city apartments or country weekend retreats). Plus, the prices are bargains. The walls are covered in pine, the displays are great, and the salespeople are friendly. Most tabletop items cost less than $25. You've never had so much fun in your life.

Domain

938 Broadway, at 22nd St. (Subway: 6 to 23rd St.).

This branch is not as good as some of the chain's suburban stores, but it gives you an idea of what the company is all about, and is not far from ABC, so you can get ideas as you wander. The store sells mostly large pieces of furniture and specializes in sofas and chairs—chicer than mass-market brands but not too chic . . . and always comfortable and fairly priced.

Ethan Allen

1107 Third Ave., at 65th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College); 192 Lexington Ave., at 32nd St. (Subway: 6 to 33rd St.).

This company's reproduction furniture, which has been popular in suburban areas for ages, is now making a big splash in Manhattan, and the company has opened several large new showrooms. The look is country and/or colonial, in various woods and veneers, and the specialty is complete suites—bedroom sets, dining-room sets, and living-room sets. My interior-designer friend Paul and I are both cringing as we tell you this. We'd rather buy from flea markets, but you might like brand-new. Suit yourself. I am compelled to confess that my sleigh bed, bought after my husband died as a psychological refreshment, came from here and I adore it. Sometimes it's not about quality or long-lasting furniture, but the thrill of the piece and how it gives you comfort.

Gracious Home

1220 Third Ave., at 70th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College); 1217 Third Ave., at 70th St. Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College); 1992 Broadway, at 67th St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 66th St./Lincoln Center).

This place has hardware, bed linens, vacuum cleaners, paint, electrical supplies, wallpaper, and everything else you could possibly need as you renovate, restore, or redo your home or apartment. Prices are in keeping with regular retail in Manhattan, but most people don't mind because of the selection. There are two stores across the street from one another on the East Side.

The West Side store is more chic to me; I like the tabletop department, although prices on many items in the store are way beyond me—like $100 a sheet. Still, it's sort of an institution and a fun place to hang out.

Home Depot

980 3rd Ave., at 59th St. (Subway: N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave./59th St.); 40 W. 23rd St., between Fifth and Sixth aves. (Subway: R or W to 23rd St.).

The famous suburban home-furnishing store opened two new branches in New York City in summer 2004.

IKEA
Exit 13A, New Jersey Tpk., Elizabeth, N.J.; Exit 41S, Long Island Expwy. (or Exit 35S, Northern State Pkwy.), Hicksville, N.Y.

Ikea is a Swedish design firm that is famous for its simple, clean-lined, light wood knock-down furniture—that means everything comes in a flat box and you build it. Prices are also knocked down, and while the furniture won't last a lifetime, it's great for a first apartment, a kid's room, or an office. There's free bus service from the Port Authority in Manhattan on weekends.

JENSEN-LEWIS
89 Seventh Ave., at 15th St. (Subway: B, D, F, or V to 14th St.).

This source specializes in a modern home look, especially leather and canvas furniture, and is conveniently located near a few other home sources, and not far from Chelsea and the Meat Packing District, so you can score in many places in one trip. Very good prices.

RESTORATION HARDWARE
935 Broadway, at 22nd St. (Subway: 6 to 23rd St.).

I wish I could rave about this store the way many people do. I like the gimmick of the personal descriptions of each item, but I find the merchandise very bland and so much like **Pottery Barn** meets **Williams-Sonoma** with a dash of **Archie McPhee** that I just don't even know how these people stay in business, let alone thrive. Still, this is a popular resource for stuff for your home.

SIMON'S HARDWARE
421 Third Ave., at 29th St. (Subway: 6 to 28th St.).

Paul gives us this professional source where anyone can shop; they specialize in knobs, handles, and pulls for cabinets, doors, and more.

THE TERENCE CONRAN SHOP
407 E. 59th St., at First Ave. (Subway: N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

It took ages to get the approval needed to build under the 59th Street Bridge (the *Feelin' Groovy* Bridge!) and to open the Bridge Market and the surrounding Terence Conran celebrations. The point of the store is to be more cutting edge than **Crate & Barrel,** but not too expensive. I admit that I am often confused between the offerings from Crate & Barrel, Pottery Barn, and Conran's, though I know that the Conran's people believe that they are trendier than the other two. Conran's also has a greater mix of merchandise, such as luggage and picnic totes (in season), and paper goods, lifestyle gadgets, and giftables.

The store has about 25,000 square feet of selling space. It's worth the trip—another of the best new stores in New York. Why are the good ones imported?

BIG NAMES IN TABLETOP

Go to the following stores for classics in crystal, porcelain, and more.

BACCARAT
625 Madison Ave., at 58th St. (Subway: N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

BERNARDAUD/LIMOGES
499 Park Ave., at 59th St. (Subway: N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

CARTIER
653 Fifth Ave., at 52nd St. (Subway: E or V to 5th Ave., at 54th St.).

Christofle
680 Madison Ave., at 62nd St. (Subway: N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

Daum
694 Madison Ave., at 62nd St. (Subway: N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

Lalique
680 Madison Ave., at 61st St. (Subway: N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

Tiffany & Co.
727 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

TRENDSETTERS IN TABLETOP ITEMS & GIFTS

Don't forget museum gift shops for excellent and sophisticated tabletop items and gifts.

Adrien Linford
1339 Madison Ave., at 94th St. (Subway: 6 to 96th St.); 927 Madison Ave., at 74th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

Paul (our resident interior designer) says that much of the merchandise here—gifts, tabletop items, and rich-lady necessities, is also at Barney's. Items are often inventive and always chic. My latest find: napkin rings created from old Chinese coins.

Apartment
101 Crosby St., at Prince St. (Subway: 6 to Spring St.).

Talk about concept stores—this SoHo fun spot is set up like a real apartment with merchandise appropriately displayed in room sets. Don't miss the bathroom downstairs—the stuff in there is for sale too.

AUTO
805 Washington St., at Gansevoort St. (Subway: C or E to 23rd St.).

I have also listed this source in the "Resources" chapter (chapter 8) as a fashion resource—also note that MOVE LAB is next door (no. 803). Like an art gallery, these stores have a whole lifestyle selection of fashion, beauty, and home items that you might want to stare at but may be afraid to even touch until you relax, and see the humor. Do your wackiest gift giving from these sources.

AVVENTURA
463 Amsterdam Ave., at 83rd St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 79th St.).

You'll find West Side chic in this store, which specializes in the best of Italian modern design, glass, and tabletop items. Open weekdays and Sunday; closed Saturday.

BARNEY'S
660 Madison Ave., at 62nd St. (Subway: N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

A marvelous store and a boon to Madison Avenue, but most of all, a fabulous gift and tabletop resource; don't miss Chelsea Passage.

BERGDORF GOODMAN
754 Fifth Ave., at 58th St. (Subway: F to 57th St., or N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

The seventh floor is the only stop you'll need to make if you want to get a quick survey of elegant choices for your home. This floor has beautiful china, linens, and stationery, but we visit for the nooks and crannies filled with the best-bought wonders of the world—from hand-painted dinner napkins sprinkled

with gold dust to Venetian glass swizzle sticks. The Christmas goodies are a must-see each year.

Kentshire of London has a shop here for antiques. Some sale products are hidden in small corners; ask.

John Derian

6 E. 2nd St., at the Bowery (Subway: J, M, or Z to Bowery).

Don't be afraid of the neighborhood, fear instead the damage you can do to your credit rating here. This decoupage (cut and paste) artist began selling plates to Bergdorf's and now has an empire of tabletop items and note cards and assorted other items made with his decoupage. It's truly an art form and the man is a genius, though an expensive genius. Sometimes you can find copies of his cut-and-paste items at Anthropologie for less moola.

MacKenzie & Childs

6 W. 57th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves. (Subway: F to 57th St.); 824 Madison Ave., at 69th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

This is a small design firm from Vermont that has its own very special shop on Madison Avenue selling hand-painted everything. There are tabletop items and more. Anyone who has ever dreamed of coming to New York to see the best and most brilliant of American talent has got to step into this store to soak up the genius and the glory. You probably can't afford to buy more than a doorknob. But what a doorknob! These folks are true innovators and creators.

"REAL PEOPLE" TABLETOP ITEMS

The only resource you really need for tabletop items, whatever your budget, is **Crate & Barrel** (p. 268). But if you're looking

for a few other resources, well, New York's got more. And the more the merrier.

FISHS EDDY
889 Broadway, at 19th St. (Subway: R or W to 23rd St., or L, N, Q, W, R, 4, 5, or 6 to Union Sq.); 2176 Broadway, at 77th St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 79th St.).

See p. 127 for the dish on all the dishes at Fishs Eddy. If you're into restaurant supply and funky styles, this is a great stop for dishes. Prices are fair; style is high.

FORTUNOFF
681 Fifth Ave., at 54th St. (Subway: E or F to 5th Ave.).

Similar to **Michael C. Fina,** but not really a discounter. Check out silver, china, dishes, other tabletop items, and even Swatch watches; this a good place to see it all, to register for it all, or to drool over it all.

ILLUMINATIONS
873 Broadway, at 18th St. (Subway: L, N, Q, W, N, R, 4, 5, or 6 to Union Sq.).

I traditionally hate candle shops because they give me an asthma attack, but this one is so chic and innovative that I'm willing to sneeze and wheeze. It's across from **ABC Carpet & Home,** so you can get a lot of look-sees in one stop. There's another branch at Rock Center.

MICHAEL C. FINA
545 Fifth Ave. (2nd floor), at 45th St. (Subway: B, D, F, or V to Rockefeller Center).

All major china, crystal, and silver lines are discounted here—Lenox, Val St. Lambert, Wedgwood, Spode, Noritake, Royal Doulton, and more. The jewelry counter is boring, but the gift shopping is tremendous fun. On a price-by-price basis, Fina may not always offer you the best prices in the world, but for

$15-to-$25 wedding gifts, or $13 teachers' presents, look no further.

Pier 1 Imports
461 Fifth Ave., at 40th St. (Subway: B, D, F, or V to 42nd St.); other locations.

The imports here are from all over the planet and certainly hail from the world of inexpensive. Indian-made clothing and fashions offer high style at low prices. It's a one-stop supermarket of wicker for your beach house, and furnishings for your first apartment or your kid's room. The Fifth Avenue store is a little jazzier than many suburban branches and offers a bit more in the way of gift items rather than big pieces. Great gift wraps around holiday season.

Pottery Barn
600 Broadway, at Houston St. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.); 127 E. 59th St., between Lexington and Park aves. (Subway: N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave./59th St.); 1965 Broadway, at 67th St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 66th/Lincoln Center).

Whenever I need Christmas gifts in the $10 range, this is my first destination. Aside from their Christmas specialties, there are paint supplies for would-be spongers, plus a host of coffee mugs, plates and platters, dishes and serving pieces, candlesticks, linens, and giftables. Add to the resource list for beach homes and first apartments. Great stuff at low prices.

Williams-Sonoma
110 Seventh Ave., at 16th St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 18th St.); 1175 Madison Ave., at 86th St. (Subway: 4, 5, or 6 to 86th St.); 121 E. 59th St., between Park and Lexington aves. (Subway: N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

Since it is more cooking- and cookware-oriented, this national chain will probably not be as hurt by **Crate & Barrel.** Housewares, fancy cookware, gourmet foodstuffs, and tabletop

items are the specialties. The chain is found in many suburban malls as well.

HOME-STYLE FACTORY OUTLETS IN NYC

ABC WAREHOUSE OUTLET
1055 Bronx River Ave., Bronx.

See the "Mass Plus Class" section earlier in this chapter.

PORTICO OUTLET STORE
231 Tenth Ave., at 25th St. (Subway: C or E to 23rd St.).

Okay, so the neighborhood isn't the greatest, but this is part of the new Chelsea. Really. Cab it and don't look back. This is a real, old-fashioned warehouse with overstock of chic, luxurious wares. Prices are not as low as I want them to be, so you may strike out (and be out the cab fare), but you may score. This is a possible source for first apartments.

THE BIG NAMES IN LINENS

FRETTE
799 Madison Ave., at 67th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

Frette sells fine and fancy Italian linen. They have also introduced a lingerie line, so you have something to wear between their fancy sheets.

PORTHAULT
18 E. 69th St., between Fifth and Madison aves. (Subway: N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

The most expensive beds in America are probably dressed in Porthault prints from France—a set of king-size sheets with

standard pillow cases is well over $1,500; if you have lots of pillows (who doesn't?) and like the shams with scalloped and hand-cut ruffles, figure another $300 per pillowcase. Porthault creates made-in-America designs for the Wamsutta line of linens, but the really fancy stuff from France is in this store. Every January the store has a half-price markdown spree. There are some less expensive knickknacks, by the way. We know some women who treat themselves to one pillowcase a year; as time goes by, these women have a delightful mélange of Porthault prints, which they mix with white sheets (always a style classic) and American quilts—the look is stunning.

Pratesi
829 Madison Ave., at 69th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./ Hunter College).

More fine Italian linen. This is the line that advertises with the suggestion that most of Europe's royalty was conceived in its sheets. Not bad, huh? A basic sheet set does costs more than $1,000 (but of course), but then, it's less expensive than **Porthault.**

Pratesi has numerous styles that are suitable for the man who doesn't want to sleep in a bed of roses or a scattering of hearts. There are twice-a-year sales, in January and July. I can personally vouch for the linens as investment—mine are washed frequently and have lasted 25 years . . . and still ticking.

Schweitzer's Linens
1132 Madison Ave., at 84th St. (Subway: 4, 5, or 6 to 86th St.); 457 Columbus Ave., at 81st St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 79th St.); 1053 Lexington Ave., at 75th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

This shop has no discount sheets, nor does it have average sheets. Everything is either the special high-end line of a major sheet company (like the Royal Collection or the Versailles Collection) or a European sheet made to look like an even more expensive

European sheet: The only **Porthault** look-alikes we've ever seen come from this shop.

These small stores feel European and cater to a well-off local crowd that wants top-of-the-line quality. There is a catalog, and they do custom work. A few designer prints are available, but the mainstream here are subtle prints (stripes, dots, bows, flowers) and the European look.

OFF-PRICE BED LINENS

Most of my bed linens come from either **T.J. Maxx** (p. **311**) or **Century 21** (p. 312) . . . or the **Pratesi** factory outlet store in Italy. In fact, the thought of paying regular retail makes my nose itch. The department stores often have good sales. In addition, many specialty stores, such as **Laura Ashley,** have their own look and their own home-style departments. If you make the trek to the Lower East Side, you may find newer styles than you'd find in off-price stores, though at a mere 20% off regular retail.

While the Lower East Side is trying to transform itself more into a home-style area than a discounter's paradise, and many resources have moved out, you can still count on **Harris Levy** (278 Grand St., between Forsyth and Eldridge sts.; Subway: B or D to Grand St.) for 20% off on bed linens.

European shoppers note: Bed sizes in the U.S., U.K., and Europe are different—know what you are doing! Sheet sizes are frequently marked in inches as well as centimeters, so look at the small print.

KITCHEN CONCEPTS

BODUM
413 W. 14th St., between Ninth and Tenth aves. (Subway: A, C, or E to 14th St.).

This French brand (best known for their French-press coffeemaker, which, ironically, is seldom used in France) has a lot of trendy kitchen items at fair prices. I have seen the merchandise at huge discounts at off-pricers, but you have to be lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time. A visit to Bodum is a good way to stock a kitchen, see the Meat Packing District, and make a pit stop at the store's cafe.

Bridge Kitchenware Corporation
214 E. 52nd St., between Second and Third aves. (Subway: E, V, or 6 to Lexington Ave./51st St.).

Calling all cooks! This is the favorite address of professional chefs in Manhattan. Whatever kitchen utensils you may need, this place will have them.

Broadway Panhandler
477 Broome St., at Greene St. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.).

This housewares store, which just relocated to new digs, seems ordinary enough at first, but it has become a local legend. Check out the selection of Wilton cake supplies and professional equipment for fancy baking. Also known for great prices on kitchen equipment.

The Container Store
Sixth Ave., at 18th St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 18th St.).

The Container Store is a good source for organizational home style and for getting started in a new home or apartment. This is one of those stores that has branches all over suburban America but has just made it to Manhattan. The location, across from Bed Bath & Beyond, makes it easy to shop and compare . . . although BBB has already begun to shift brands and stock in order to have no crossover merchandise. See p. 135 for more.

DEAN & DELUCA
560 Broadway, at Prince St. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.).

There may not be a more "in" place in SoHo than Dean & Deluca. This upscale grocery store, greengrocer, and cookware store has the beautiful people (and a coffee counter where you can stare at them), the beautiful fruit, and the prices to match. We love it here and insist that you visit. But we must warn you: We first spotted pastel-colored (pink, blue, yellow, and lavender) pasta here at $8 a pound, and hours later we found the same stuff at an uptown gourmet deli for $2 a pound!

HOLD EVERYTHING
1311 Second Ave., at 68th St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./ Hunter College); 104 Seventh Ave., at 16th St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 18th St.).

Another division of the **Pottery Barn/Williams-Sonoma** people, this store sells containers, shelving, and gadgets for kitchen, closet, and more.

BATHROOM CONCEPTS

Obviously **Bed Bath & Beyond** is a good place to start when doing a bathroom or when searching for bathroom accessories (p. 268). Other resources such as **The Container Store** and discounters like **T.J. Maxx** and **Century 21** have fine choices. If you want to spend more, **Gracious Home** has plenty that will spin your head (p. 270).

APARTMENT
101 Crosby St., at Prince St. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.).

See page 273 for listing.

Howard Kaplan Bath Shop
827 Broadway, at 13th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, W, R, L, N, or Q to Union Sq.).

Very French and much fun—worth a splurge if this is your style.

Portico Home Furnishings
72 Spring St., between Lafayette and Crosby sts. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.).

Good source for fancy bed linens and bathroom chic; see p. 278 for the outlet store.

Waterworks
225 E. 57th St., between Second and Third aves. (Subway: N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

When you care enough to have the very best, shop at Waterworks for everything from fixtures to bathroom design elements. Prices are high, but the selection is unique and sophisticated and makes you feel that since the bathroom is indeed where you spend a lot of time, you should enjoy it.

ELECTRONICS CONCEPTS

Apple Store
103 Prince St., at Greene St. (Subway: R or W to Prince St.)

The Big Apple now has its own extremely hip Apple Store for Apple and Mac computer people. There's a Q&A desk upstairs to help you understand tech stuff. What has SoHo come to?

Best Buy
Sixth Ave., at 23rd St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 23rd St.).

This is another instance of the suburbs invading retail concepts and "big box" stores coming into Manhattan. This branch of

the chain Best Buy is in a great part of town (near The Container Store and many off-pricers) and has computer and electronics for the home and whole family.

BROOKSTONE
Rockefeller Center, 16 W. 50th St. (Subway: B, D, F, or V to Rockefeller Center).

This is the original big boy's toy and gadget store, with plenty of products to test. If you don't live in Manhattan, there's probably a branch in the mall nearest you. This is a good source for gifts.

COMPUSA
420 Fifth Ave., at 37th St. (Subway: 6 to 33rd St.).

CompUSA is a "big box"–style warehouse store, just like in the 'burbs, for computers, software, and supplies. They also do repairs.

HAMMACHER SCHLEMMER
147 E. 57th St., between Lexington and Third aves. (Subway: N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave./59th St.)

This is the place for gadgets and toys and travel devices and everything that whirrs and whistles and goes bump in the night. There are floors and floors of fun and novelty items—some of them are even practical and worth the money.

SHARPER IMAGE
4 W. 57th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves. (Subway: F to 57th St.).

For the life of me, I can't adequately explain the difference between Brookstone and Sharper Image, except that the gadgets at Brookstone tend to be more health- and relaxation-oriented while Sharper Image has more technology items and cutting-edge gadgets.

Sony Style
550 Madison Ave., at 55th St. (Subway: E, F, or V to Lexington/51st St.).

You can play with all the latest toys and gadgets here. You cannot, however, play with the many boys and young men who hang out here.

FLOWER & GARDEN CONCEPTS

When I need fresh flowers for a dinner party, I am most likely to go to the wholesale flower district—Sixth Avenue at 23rd Street—and poke around, cash in hand. When asked for a resale number, I provide my social security number and ask to pay the tax to keep everything legal.

Smith & Hawken
394 W. Broadway, at Broome St. (Subway: J, M, N, Q, W, N, or R to Canal St.).

Smith & Hawken began as a catalogue company and now has stores stretched across America. They sell stylish garden, floral, table, and general home style with a touch of the green thumb.

HOME-FURNISHING FABRICS & YARD GOODS

Also see the "Fabrics, Notions, Trims & More" section in chapter 8 and take a look at the small shops clustered on East 20th and East 19th streets near Broadway (around the corner from ABC Carpet & Home).

Paterson Silks
151 W. 72nd St., between Columbus and Amsterdam aves. (Subway: 1, 2, 3, or 9 to 72nd St.).

This place is pretty funky, and you'll need a bit of a sense of humor to shop here. These guys are mass purveyors of fabrics, curtains, slipcovers, and even fashion fabrics (and patterns). You never know what will turn up on a bolt here. Last time I stopped by, the selection made my skin crawl. After I got used to the stock, though, and adjusted my sights, I realized there were a lot of simple basics at very good prices.

PIERRE DEUX
625 Madison Ave., at 58th St. (Subway: N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

This reincarnation of Pierre Deux has far more than fabrics—it's an entire French-country lifestyle shop with many items that are not even found in the French countryside. They carry Les Olivades printed fabrics and their own custom-made line. They no longer sell Souleiado. In addition to the fabrics, check out the gift items, tabletop items, and furnishings in this large store.

SILK SURPLUS
1127 Second Ave., at 59th St. (Subway: N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

Even though it's not a warehouse filled with discount fabrics, as the name might imply, this small space does have a number of choices. Among the better buys are the trims. Everything is on a bolt; the sales help is pretty knowledgeable if you ask directly for help. They have several branches around town, as well as their own "boutique" in **ABC Carpet & Home.**

FLEA MARKETS

Just because you buy it at a flea market does not mean it's a bargain or the price is any better than in a store. Know your

prices and comparative values, and keep in mind that this is alternative retail—vendors may tell you any old hogwash in order to get you to buy. We've heard "antiques" vendors say some outrageous (false) things about their wares. Be careful. You should also know that cash is preferred (especially if you are bargaining), most markets are held on weekends (and some only on 1 day), markets that are held outdoors are held "weather permitting" (which means there's no market in a downpour or when it's freezing), and some markets do not operate on the weekend between Christmas and New Year's.

There are special-event flea markets, such as the **Pier Shows,** which are sensational, especially when money is tight and dealers want to raise cash. Watch the trade newspapers for announcements of these shows and other markets. See below for more on Brimfield, the king of the flea markets.

The Annex Antiques Fair & Flea Market

Sixth Ave., from 24th to 27th sts. (Subway: 6 to 23rd St. or 28th St.).

This is one of the best in terms of getting the adrenaline running and the heart pumping fast for a few hours of shopping fun. I must warn you, however, that this place was "discovered" a while ago; it's "in," the prices can be very high, and vendors may not know their stuff. The crowd that shops, however, is as much fun as the dealers and the goods.

On Saturday there is an outdoor market in two parking lots; on Sunday there is an outdoor market in three lots. There is a $1 admission charge to the main lot only. The market is open from sunrise to sunset. On Saturday and Sunday there is an additional indoor market called Metropolitan Arts & Antiques Pavilion at 110 W. 19th St. (between Sixth and Seventh aves.). Hours are 9am to 5pm. The indoor market has free admission and is near the outdoor street market. There are more markets on West 25th Street, one of which is in a garage and therefore called Garage Market.

BRIMFIELD

Brimfield, Massachusetts.

The country's wildest flea market is held three times a year in Brimfield, a small Massachusetts community near Sturbridge Village. About 50,000 people show up for each of the three events, which last a week each. Thousands of dealers from all over the country come to Brimfield for the event; this is truly the largest flea market in the world. The May fair is the most popular, but all three are worthwhile for antiques dealers, and professional shoppers and pickers. If you aren't quick-witted, you'll be trampled to death!

Pros are there when the gates open at 7am and run around like maniacs papering the place with money. We just go for the day and don't do it that way, but you should experiment and find your own style.

Please note that there are several areas in town where the flea markets are held, and that it really does take most of the week to do this properly, the way a dealer should, so a day-trip might be frustrating. The event lasts a week, but most of the various areas are only open for 3 days during each event.

Book motel rooms way in advance if you are staying over. Leave the kids at home. The market is held three times per year in May, July, and September. For the dates of the market, call the Brimfield market office at ✆ **413/245-3436** or 508/597-8155, or check their website at www.brimfield.com for more information.

THE CHELSEA ANTIQUES BUILDING

110 W. 25th St., between Sixth and Seventh aves. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 23rd St.).

This building has 12 floors of stuff to please the crowds swarming the Annex market (discussed earlier). It's quite a commitment just to do this one source. Note that this place is open 7 days a week while the nearby Annex flea market is open only on the weekend.

The Garage
112 W. 25th St., between Sixth and Seventh aves. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 23rd St.).

The Garage offers space to 150 dealers, and is open every Saturday and Sunday from 7am to 5pm. As the name implies, it's in a garage and the dealers are the most low-end of the bunch in the area. This doesn't mean you should skip it. I love this resource, but then I like the down-and-dirty stuff. Besides, it's not that dirty.

P.S. 41
Greenwich Ave., between Sixth and Seventh aves. (Subway: A, C, E, F, B, D, or V to W. 4th St.).

This is a schoolyard extravaganza complete with greenmarket. It gets going late, so don't arrive before 11am. This is part of the glory of the Village. Open Saturday only.

P.S. 44 Flea Market
Columbus Ave., at 76th St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 79th St.).

There's no street address to look for—just find the school and its big fence. This is a varied market with several parts to it so, as a whole, it's got something for everyone. There's a small greenmarket—don't miss the pretzels—and there's both an outdoor and an indoor portion of the flea market.

The outdoor portion is as large as the schoolyard and brimming with colors, energy, and style. You'll find lots of arts and crafts and, of course, traditional flea-market–esque "antiques." There's a large percentage of people who seem to have just returned from some exotic destination and have set up a booth to offer folk ware from wherever they traveled to (Ecuador, Mexico, Bali). There's also a small percentage of new and basic merchandise (socks, underwear, pet needs). Nothing beats a gorgeous day, a hot pretzel, some money in your hand, and all this fun.

Inside the school is a jumble of tables and "antiques"—I get claustrophobic from it all. I'm happy enough with the antiques and used treasures sold outside; on a pretty day it seems like a sin to be indoors and the crowds don't agree with me. Sunday only, from 10am to 5:30pm.

SoHo Antique & Flea Market
465 Broadway, at Grand St. (Subway: C or E to Spring St.).

This is the funkiest of the Manhattan markets—much more like a tag sale than the others; much more casual. Held in a parking lot, the market is "antiques" with an emphasis on vintage clothing, used cameras, and so on. Not worth going out of your way to visit, but nice as part of a SoHo spree. Open every Saturday and Sunday from 9am to 5pm.

AUCTIONS FOR ART & ANTIQUES

There's a war going on in them thar sale rooms, so stay tuned. **Christie's,** hoping to ease past **Sotheby's** and get more business, has lowered the seller's premium. The world waits with bated breath to see who sneezes next.

For buying art, antiques, collectibles, or fancy junk, auctions are a good training ground. If you study catalogs, go to viewings, eavesdrop on conversations, and attend enough auctions, you'll become knowledgeable not only in the art of auctioning, but also in the nuances of the items you collect and of those who also collect them.

There are two types of auction houses: big-time and fun-time. They never get the same kinds of lots, though each big-time house has a more casual division.

Things go to auction for two reasons: One, a collector has decided to give up a piece or pieces of his or her collection; or two, a collector has died and the estate needs to liquidate the assets. Country auctions are usually the best places to find overlooked pieces. These auctions are advertised in local papers as

well as in *Antiques and the Arts Weekly,* published by Bee Publishing Company (✆ **203/426-8036**) in Newtown, Connecticut. If you're looking for something more serious to keep you up on the latest auctions, get a subscription to *Art & Auction,* a glossy magazine dedicated to those who care.

Previews (also called viewings or exhibitions) are very important and occur the week before the auction. During the auction, there is no time to think or change your mind; you must know ahead of time if you are going to bid on a piece, and you can even send in a sealed bid or fax your bid ahead of time.

During previews it is important to think about the following questions:

- Are there provenance papers on the item (which give the history of ownership)? All quality pieces of furniture and art will have them.
- What is the condition of the item? How many repairs have been done to the legs? Can you tell if anything has been replaced? Has the piece been refinished recently, and if so, by whom? Can you ask the owner for details? Usually the answer to this last question is no. In this case, you might consider hiring a consultant to look at the piece for you.
- Can you guarantee authenticity? Provenance papers help, of course. We need not tell you about all the fakes that have gone through the auction houses. Quality houses will authenticate as best they can, but even they get fooled sometimes. Authentications will be found in the catalog listing. If nothing is listed, ask why. Very often the auction house cannot risk giving a guarantee unless there is no question as to the origin of the item. We once attended an auction where the auctioneer asked the artist to stand up and authenticate her work of art in person.

Once you leave the preview, take the catalog home and read the fine print. Everything you need to know about how the

auction will be run and what the house is responsible for handling is in the front or back of the catalog.

Check to see if the piece you will be bidding on is "subject to reserve." "Reserve" is the minimum price for which the piece will be sold. It is a confidential price known only to the auction house and the owner of the piece. However, it is important for you to know if you will be bidding against a set price because sometimes the piece will be taken off the block if the reserve is not met. Sometimes the house will bid on behalf of the consignee (the person who is auctioning the item) to meet the reserve.

Tucked into the catalog, or on the final pages of the book, will be a list of prices for the lot numbers that show what a similar item went for at a previous date, or what the house estimates the sale price to be. This can give you an idea of where to expect the bidding to fall. Or it might not. One of the reasons that auctions are so much fun is that you never know what will happen.

Once you have done your homework and decide to attend the auction to bid on one or more "lots," there are a few more details:

You may be asked to register when you arrive at the auction house. If the auction involves high-stakes items and you are going to be bidding above $10,000, bring credit references with you. Once you have registered, you will be given a "paddle" with your bidding number on it. This number corresponds to your registration. During the auction, names are never used. Lots are assigned to the highest bidder's number.

Don't be shy when bidding. If the auctioneer can't see your paddle, you will lose out on the bidding. Everything you've heard about sneezes, flicks of the wrist, or eyebrow arching is nonsense. While some people bid in a subtle motion, everyone does know what's going on—even if paddles aren't being used.

If you can't be present at the auction, you can name a representative to bid for you, or be on the phone with a member

of the auction-house staff. It is also possible to bid by mail. Absentee bid forms are published in the auction catalog, or can be obtained from the auction house by mail.

When figuring price, don't forget to add in the auction-house commission and the tax. Ask ahead of time what the auction house will be taking as its cut. If you thought the price you bid was the price paid, welcome to the cruel world of auctions. The auction house gets from 10% to 20% of the sale price. If you are bidding on a large item, figure in the cost of delivery also. The auction houses all have services to help you get the item home, but they are not free.

Payment will be requested at the time of the sale, unless you have an account with the house or have arranged ahead of time to be invoiced. All large auction houses preregister bidders and check references.

Payment for goods will be asked for in U.S. dollars. Although you will see prices being quoted on the currency board in many international currencies during the bidding, it is merely for the convenience of the international clientele, so that they can compare the price in dollars with the price in their own currency. On small items, you can often pay with American Express, Visa, or MasterCard.

If you are planning on shipping your purchase out of the country, be sure to obtain an export permit from either the auction house or whatever department of antiquities applies—the auction house will tell you. As in European countries, some items may not be exportable. Check with a U.S. Customs expert in this area.

You will be expected to take possession of your purchase within 3 working days. After that time, you will be charged a storage fee.

Read the *New York Times*'s Thursday "Home" section for listings of weekly events. Also check ads in the Friday *Times* and, perhaps, the Saturday *Times*.

If you are observing but aren't planning to buy, you may be a tad nervous. Relax. You're welcome here, even if you don't

bid. Dress like you own a bank, and you'll be fine. Admission to a big-time event is always by catalog (the catalog admits two)—pay for the catalog at the desk before the preview, right before the actual auction, or subscribe. Prices range from $2 to $25.

Many big-time auctions are star-studded events and may be black tie. A collection of important jewels, by the way, does have a viewing, but the bidding is done with slides on a screen, as if it were home-movie night. Remember to keep your cool when the really big rocks are screened. Previews are far more casual than auctions; you may even attend in blue jeans, as long as you are wearing Gucci loafers with them. It is better to go to the preview, but it's not imperative if you are not planning on buying. You will see the items at much closer range at the preview, and you can touch many of them. This is a no-no during the auction.

Should you be planning on buying for the first time in the big time, you may want to walk through it all at an auction that is not yours, just to get the lay of the land. After all, there's no reason to be intimidated or unduly nervous when you will have enough on your mind spending your trust fund on a piece of canvas and oil paint.

CHRISTIE'S
20 Rockefeller Plaza, at 49th St. (Subway: B, D, F, or V to Rockefeller Center).

CHRISTIE'S EAST
219 E. 67th St., between Second and Third aves. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./Hunter College).

Christie's is a British firm; Sotheby's is based in the United States. People who shop big-time auctions do not prefer one house to the other; they merely choose the auction they are interested in. The difference between the two houses is probably inside, behind closed doors, and is possibly evident in how they woo potential customers and their estates. Both houses will treat

you and your money with equal charm or disdain, depending on your money and your manners. There's a 10% buyer's premium (the buyer pays 10% more than the selling price to the house). Call the number above to request a catalog.

Christie's East sometimes sells goods that are less fancy than those sold at the main branch. Call ✆ **212/636-2000** for more information about auctions held while you're in town

Phillips De Pury & Company

450 W. 15 St., between ninth and tenth aves. (Subway: A, C, E, or L to 14th St., at 8th Ave.)

Phillips is an international auction house of the same caliber as **Christie's** and **Sotheby's.** With offices around the world, they are able to acquire lots of good-quality items, some with incredible pedigrees, representing centuries of ostentatious buying or conservative wealth poured discreetly into fabulous collections. It is also possible to participate in their European auctions without going abroad; you can register in New York, and the house will bid on your behalf. Call ✆ **212/940-1200** or visit www.phillips-dpl.com for information on current auctions.

Sotheby's

1334 York Ave., at 72nd St. (Subway: 6 to 68th St./ Hunter College).

Sotheby's is the world's "other" famous auction house, leading the ranks along with **Christie's.** They publish a catalog for all sales, national and international. You can subscribe to the catalogs that deal only with your collecting mania (painting, pre-Columbian, furniture, and so on), which is a wonderful way to keep up with the international market in your area.

Sotheby's experts are available for consultation to both buyers and sellers. (Other auction houses also provide this service.) If you have a piece of art that you think is worthy of being put up for auction, you can make an appointment to bring it

in or have an expert visit you. I've fallen in love with a few of their experts; they know their stuff and are really fun to be with—especially when you share a common interest.

Sotheby's people make periodic trips to major cities around the country. Their visits are advertised in the local newspapers the week before they arrive; they also have representatives in most of the major cities in the U.S.

Sotheby's **Arcade Auctions** are for those of us who love to buy but can't yet afford an old master. These sales are well within the affordable range and often involve surprise packages. Lots are sometimes sold in groups.

Sotheby's also has sidewalk sales, when they mark down their unsold items and clear house. Look in the newspaper for an announcement of these sales; it'll be the most fun you've had in years. For more information visit www.sothebys.com or call **✆ 541/312-5682.**

Swann Galleries

104 E. 24th St., between Park and Lexington aves., 6th floor (Subway: R or W to 23rd St.).

Specialists in books and paper goods, movie posters, and ephemera, this upstairs location is low-key and funky. There's a 10% buyer's premium. **Tepper Galleries** is at street level; no, I'm not mixed up—Swann is upstairs so take the elevator. You'll be thrilled when you get there. For more information visit www.swanngalleries.com or call **✆ 212/254-4710.**

William Doyle Galleries

175 E. 87th St., between Lexington and Third aves. (Subway: 4, 5, or 6 to 86th St.).

Doyle's tries to acquire some unusual items not seen in the other houses, and they are not quite as intimidating to us as the big-timers. The house has important auctions and must get your equal attention if you are a serious shopper, even though snobs will tell you it just isn't Christie's. For more information visit www.doylenewyork.com or call **✆ 212/427-2730.**

HOITY-TOITY ANTIQUES: THE UPPER EAST SIDE

The Upper East Side is home to the best of the best. If you are looking for a Ming vase, Empire chairs, a Federal hutch, or a Louis sofa, and have a well-endowed checkbook, look no further. These shops are superb in both quality and selection. The owners are knowledgeable and willing to help you find what you are in search of. They will also authenticate and help you ship.

Most hoity-toity shops are specialists; many require an appointment and are not even open to the public. (I haven't listed any of those, thank you.) Seek and ye shall find; shop and ye shall spend. If you are buying, dress however you please. If you are browsing, please look the part and dress up in respect for the artworks and the dealers.

Not to Be Missed

This one is in a category by itself and is one of those "Gee, Toto" kinds of places. They do not have one of these in your hometown, no matter where you come from (unless you're from Manhattan).

Newel Galleries

425 E. 53rd St., between First Ave. and Sutton Place (Subway: 1 or 9 to 23rd St.).

Shocking and wonderful and weird and fabulous and incredible and not to be believed and, well, you just have to go see this for yourself. Newel is an antiques resource of extraordinary proportions. Many pieces are for rent; all are one of a kind. Every variety of antique can be found somewhere in the vast recesses of the six floors of warehouse space. You have to experience Newel to appreciate its unusual nature. This is theater. This is what you came to New York for. Closed on weekends.

NOT QUITE HOITY OR TOITY, BUT FANCY

In the last few decades, East 60th Street in the 200 block has been many things. Lately, the area has become home to a large number of antiques shops selling mostly Continental antiques, not of the Lord-Rothschild-is-pleased category, but far above the flea market and garden variety. There are almost two dozen dealers here, so the best thing to do is to walk and wander. Begin at no. 207 and make your way east—a few shops are open to the trade only.

And Don't Forget

Manhattan Arts & Antiques Center
1050 Second Ave., at 56th St. (Subway: N, R, W, 4, 5, or 6 to Lexington Ave./59th St.).

This place houses about 100 dealers selling this and that, and is open Monday through Saturday 10:30am to 6pm, Sunday noon to 6pm. I have bought here and used to come here often; now I prefer tag sales and flea markets, but this is still fun. These are professional dealers, and they know what they've got.

NOT-SO-FANCY ANTIQUES

You don't have to grow up in Versailles to want to buy antiques. Even if your budget is limited, you can still find enough selection and enough specialty items to make a trip to the markets worthwhile. Recent college grads and young professionals take note: You can have your cake and eat it too.

Enjoy Madison Avenue and the East Side and all the gilt trips you can stand, but take your checkbook when you travel to 12th Street or to Brooklyn—these are the areas where designers go to nose through lots of stuff, hoping to find hidden jewels. The shoppers wear blue jeans or are properly dressed professionals, although Brooklyn on a weekend is decidedly laid-back.

Atlantic Avenue, Brooklyn

Many of the antiques shops that could no longer pay the rent in Manhattan moved to Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn. The street is incredibly long and houses many, many antiques stores of varying quality and price range. If you're coming from Manhattan, take the F train to the Bergen Street stop. Walk back along Smith Street and turn right onto Atlantic after 3 blocks. On weekends, there's a flea market–like affair set up by dealers for locals.

If the F train isn't convenient, try the M, N, Q, R, W, 2, 3, 4, or 5 lines to the Atlantic Avenue/Pacific Street stations. You can also get here from Long Island on the railroad (Brooklyn Terminal). It's about 5 blocks from there to the antiques neighborhood.

The greatest concentration of antiques shops starts at Hoyt Street and continues along Atlantic Avenue for about 10 blocks.

University Place

Located between the Village, SoHo, NoHo, Washington Square, and the nether regions of lower Manhattan, University Place is a street that's just filled with the fun kind of antiques shops that I love to prowl. University Place is on the East Side of Manhattan, just below 14th Street; it creates its own little neighborhood, bounded by Broadway, which at this point in its life is now on the East Side.

We're talking one resource that may have six floors of great stuff. This is not the home of the $35 bed frame, but this is where affordable furniture can be yours. You should know your market if you are spending a lot of money or think you have a serious piece; otherwise, just enjoy.

If this sounds like I've just told you about the funkiest little yet-to-be-discovered part of town ever created, think again. Some very sharp dealers have already moved down here and are slowly creating a gentrified zone connected to the renewal of the entire Fifth Avenue area between 23rd and 14th streets

and the Gramercy Park area. The area is so well combed by dealers that the diamonds get ferreted out very quickly. You may be forced to make do with rhinestones. And if you're the kind who only likes the high and the mighty, honey, this ain't for you. Home, James.

Chapter Eleven

NEW YORK BARGAINS

BARGAIN CAPITAL USA

New York, with so many retail opportunities, also has a lot of bargain opportunities. Retail has been hard hit by the city's struggle for financial recovery, so everywhere you look there's a sale or a deal. And this is the town where the slogan "I can get it for you wholesale" is a way of life. So step this way, have I got a deal for you.

If you're visiting from overseas, no doubt you think New York, even at regular retail prices, is indeed a bargain mecca, because compared to regular retail prices in Britain or France, it is. And you haven't even been to **Woodbury Common** yet. And you probably don't know about **Filene's Basement** or **Loehmann's.** If you're British, you probably know about **T.J. Maxx,** but maybe not. And you surely have never heard of **Century 21.** Don't even know to thank Sy Syms and his firm, **Syms,** in your nightly prayers? Read on, read on.

I urge all international visitors to New York to read this chapter and highlight the good parts. If your English is spotty, get a dictionary. This is the part where I tell you about the *gangas* (that's "bargains" in Spanish and, yes, it was one of the first words I learned in Spanish).

SALES

You can get a good bargain at any good store, but in New York you get an incredible selection during sale times. Since many department stores carry the same merchandise, you may be able to build your wardrobe as you go from store to store, buying part of an outfit at one store and finishing the look off with a component from another store.

Like all parts of the United States, New York has two big sale periods: Spring and summer merchandise are sold at rock-bottom prices from mid-July through August, and fall merchandise goes on sale right after Christmas or in January.

Some stores have cyclical sale periods—they clean house every 60 to 90 days and mark down automatically, with or without big sale announcements. Or, they may have private sales for charge or preferred customers. If a store needs cash, it may host a 1-day sale, with hours from 8am until 11pm (or so), just to bring in as much traffic as possible and boost the bottom line.

Most sales are announced in local newspapers, and some special sales are written about editorially, as in *New York* magazine's "Sales and Bargains" column. Even factory outlets have sales. Sometimes a store runs a coupon ad in the newspaper that corresponds to a sale—you get a 15% or 20% discount with the use of the coupon. This is not as low-rent as it sounds; some of Manhattan's biggest department stores do it regularly, especially around holidays when they want to jump-start the shopping season.

Sales in New York come in all different flavors. When Chanel runs a sale, it prints an invitation in the *New York Times* telling customers that they can "refresh their wardrobes at reduced prices." How's that for genteel? My friend Polly convinced me that we had to cover the Hermès sale for academic purposes and, oh my, what a fiasco: hand-drawn poster boards on the floor of Hermès with arrows pointing to the upstairs salon; silks in clear plastic garbage bags piled on the floor; ladies' room closed to sale shoppers. Enter this door; exit this door;

stand here, Madame; yes we are sold out of silk scarves; no, Madame, we do not give boxes or gift-wrap sale merchandise.

The conditions of the sale are posted in the store during the sale. Yes, even at the Hermès sales they do this. Some stores specify a no-return policy during sale periods; if an item is not returnable, the clerk must tell you that it is not returnable, and the sales slip must also state this fact.

One final tip about sales: At American designer stores and department stores after-Christmas sales fall, well, after Christmas—either the day after or right after New Year's Day. However, the European designer boutiques have their sales much, much later in January—the third or fourth week in January to be exact. I mention this because if you are flying to New York specifically to shop the after-Christmas sales, do not assume that December 26 is the magic day. It may indeed be January 26! Also note that the July sales are now held during the last week of June.

NONTRADITIONAL RETAILING

Most New Yorkers depend on various nontraditional methods of retailing to keep up their standard of living: vintage clothing continues to be popular; jewelry and accessories are frequently bought off the street or from markets that sell their low-cost wares off pegboards; and trips are often made to New Jersey for bulk shopping. There are private parties in homes for direct selling, and there are newsletters listing sample sales.

Smart shoppers combine their good clothes and luxury brands with items bought from catalogs, discounters, off-pricers, street vendors, and private sales—and get away with it.

DEPARTMENT STORE SECRETS

New York is the king of department store flagships, so even if you have a branch of these stores in your hometown, you

owe it to yourself—and your bottom line—to visit the Manhattan branch. A with-it department store has mouthwatering colors, ambience, entertainment, and cachet, in addition to great markdowns (they're often able to offer their shoppers a kind of value not seen elsewhere). You'd be surprised at just what kinds of bargains and treats you may find in New York's department stores.

Besides offering fantastic sales, look to department stores to offer promotions and customer services you just can't find anywhere else. A large department store once gave away a second strand of pearls to customers who bought one strand (a Mother's Day promotion), and cosmetics and perfume gift-with-purchase deals and giveaways are commonplace. The big thing now is the extra bonus—bring in a coupon to get a free product, turn in your old lipstick and get a free new one, and so on. There might not be a free lunch in New York, but there certainly are free makeovers. Extras are everywhere you turn in department stores.

When it comes to bargains, remember that department stores have to unload merchandise just like every other retailer does. They do this through the rather old method we all love best: sales. But when the sale merchandise isn't all sold, what happens to it? It does not go to retail heaven. Usually it goes back to the warehouse, to be held for the annual department store warehouse sale—or to the factory outlet store. Yep, department stores now have factory outlets. They are all located outside of Manhattan, out of respect for regular retail, but they aren't hard to get to, so read on.

All That Glitters Is Not Gold

A thought: Many places that look like bargain basements may merely offer inexpensive—read: cheap—merchandise. Quality is everything or a bargain isn't a bargain.

Note: If you are not experienced at negotiating department store sales, ask a salesperson for help. There are often additional markdowns off the last ticketed price that are hard to discern.

TIPS FOR BARGAIN BASEMENT SHOPPING

Here are some tips for shopping the bargain basements:

- Remember that bargain basements may or may not have new merchandise. Some get their goods at the beginning of the season; others don't get new items until traditional stores have dumped their unsold merchandise. Old merchandise is always less expensive than new merchandise.
- Look for damages.
- Know the return policy before you buy.
- Try everything on; actual sizes may be different from the marked sizes.
- If you are shopping in a chain, understand that another branch of that chain will have some of the same merchandise and some different merchandise; the better the zip code, the better the choices. Along the same lines, different factory outlets can have entirely different merchandise in the exact same time frame.
- Expect communal dressing rooms and sometimes-primitive conditions.
- Be prepared to check your handbag and/or your shopping bags. Security can be offensively tight at a bargain basement.
- Remember that few bargain basements will mail packages for you.

Shop a department store before you go to a bargain basement so that you know what kinds of prices to look for. At various well-known bargain basements (all listed in this book), I saw the same designer blouse on the same day for several different prices that covered a range of more than $100. The

Saks Fifth Avenue price was $230. I then saw the blouse at different outlets for $180, $163, $142, $109, and $93. It is impossible to know which bargain is the very best bargain when you are shopping, but try to do a little homework first.

Also know that department store prices can be competitive to outlet prices. Try this experience on for size: I was shopping at my beloved Filene's Basement, where I found a truly fabulous, stunning skirt by a Belgian designer for the Filene's Basement price of $49. A sensational bargain. But wait: The Neiman Marcus price tag, still attached, showed all the markdown prices that Neiman's had used in order to sell this little skirt. The last price on the floor at Neiman's was $51! While both prices are great bargains, there ain't much margin here, and department store prices, very frequently, are as good as it gets.

Some bargain basements just don't have bargains. Let the shopper beware.

DISCOUNT STORES & OFF-PRICERS

So what's the difference between a discounter and an off-pricer? The discounter sells some current brand-name merchandise and some private-label merchandise at a 20%-to-25% discount off prices that you'd find in department stores. The off-pricer sometimes sells current merchandise that is gleaned from a warehouse closeout, but often sells older merchandise at a deeper discount.

Just for comparison's sake, remember that sale prices in any department store are 20% to 50% off. The big difference is that the department store offers the sale price after the merchandise has been on the floor for a while. The discounter starts off with the "everyday low price."

Discounters may also have merchandise made for them, specifically created by designers to be sold at low prices—Target is famous for this, but Loehmann's used to sell clothes made for them by the big brands that you couldn't differentiate from designer clothes unless you compared the two pieces.

Target and **Kmart** are two of the more famous discounters. **Filene's Basement, Century 21, T.J. Maxx,** and **Daffy's** are off-pricers. I actually think that **Loehmann's** functions as both. As we go to press, there is no Target store in Manhattan. However, there are Target stores outside of New York, as well as frequent Target promotions in New York City.

Off-pricers offer the most savings. These stores can be smaller and less fancy than discounters, or as big as a warehouse and very nicely decorated. Have you been to **Century 21** lately? The Manhattan store has been redone after the September 11, 2001, attacks, and is as fancy as any department store. Century 21 has also redone their store in Brooklyn.

Easy Access: These Stores Are Everywhere

Bolton's

27 W. 57th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave.); 1180 Madison Ave., at 86th St. (Subway: 4, 5, or 6 to 86th St.); 4 E. 34th St., near Fifth Ave. (Subway: 6 to 33rd St.); other locations.

When I discuss Bolton's, I'm not talking the same quality as Filene's Basement or even the same kind of names. My best finds at Bolton's have been on hats and on midrange brand names. Very often I don't see a single name I know in the whole store.

I like the West 57th Street store, since I am most often in that neighborhood, but Bolton's shops are seemingly everywhere. The addresses listed here represent a few conveniently located stores. Check the phone book or Web for more options.

Conway

1333 Broadway, at 35th St. (Subway: B, D, F, V, N, R, W, or Q to 34th St./Herald Sq.); 11 W. 34th St., between Fifth and Sixth aves. (Subway: 6 to 33rd St., or B, D, F, V, N, R, W, or Q to 34th St./Herald Sq.); 201 E. 42nd St., at Third Ave. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, 7, or S to 42nd St./Grand Central). Other locations.

Conway has many different branches and parts to it; to get the real flavor, you must shop at the giant store near **Macy's** on Broadway. The other stores are ordinary and bland, but not this one: it's a real Turkish bazaar (albeit air-conditioned), with tables piled high with merchandise—out-of-season, discontinued, unloved styles, and designer overruns. This branch is the souk of your dreams, but you have to like the jumble. This is not Bendel's. This is a bargain basement in the truest sense of the word; all it lacks is basement space. This is only for the strong-hearted! The West 34th Street stores are average and not as overwhelming.

There are actually more than five different branches in the same neighborhood. If you like cheap clothes for your kids, inexpensive towels for summer camp, or discounted household goods, you just might have a good time here.

International shoppers get a discount when they show their passports to the cashier.

DAFFY'S

115 Fifth Ave., at 18th St. (Subway: F or V to 14th St. or L to 6th Ave.); 335 Madison Ave., at 44th St. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, 7, or S to 42nd St./Grand Central); 1311 Broadway, at 35th St. (Subway: B, D, F, V, N, R, W, or Q to 34th St./Herald Sq.); 125 E. 57th St., between Park and Madison aves. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave.).

Although I don't score on every visit, this is the kind of store I always check out in homage to past bargains. Daffy's does get some names sometimes, and you can do rather well for yourself.

The store on Madison is convenient for midtown shoppers, although the downtown store is much bigger. The East 57th Street store is the most convenient for visitors and is also the fanciest and easiest to shop. The downtown store has three levels of fun, with a large men's department as well as a luggage

department and a good selection of women's accessories. There are also shoes for men and women.

The West Side store, near Macy's, is a many-level splendor inside a mall: It is truly overwhelming. And I am not overwhelmed easily. This branch is my least favorite.

Like all the places listed in this section, it's very much hit-or-miss at Daffy's.

Filene's Basement

2222 Broadway, at 79th St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.); 620 Sixth Ave., at 18th St. (Subway: F or V to 14th St. or L to 6th Ave.).

Filene's Basement sells overruns and unsold designer goodies, from shoes to underwear, for men and women. It has a petites department and a plus-size department.

The Boston stores are better, but that doesn't mean you should ignore the New York branch stores—heaven forbid—it just means that New York can be spotty. You have to get lucky. Because of financial reorganization, New York stores sometimes don't get the merchandise or brands they used to get. And don't freak because the store was sold and has new management—they still get plenty of big names plus the brands that you don't normally find and may not even recognize.

Of the two branches in Manhattan, I think the downtown one is superior to the 79th Street store. Also, the downtown store is in the same building as T.J. Maxx, so you get two birds with one credit card.

Announcement: The New York stores now also participate in the bridal sale—a total mad house with a heap of wedding gowns at rock-bottom prices, usually $99 each for gowns worth up to $10,000. So here's the deal: You wait in line, then you race in and grab *any* gown. Then you can trade with other people if you want. The sales are usually in February and November and are announced in the newspaper.

FORMAN'S

82 Orchard St., near Broome St. (Subway: B or D to Grand St.); 59 John St., at William St. (Subway: J, M, Z, 4, 5, 6, 1, 2, 3, or 9 to Fulton St.); 145 E. 42nd St., between Lexington and Third aves. (Subway: 4, 5, 6, 7, or S to 42nd St./Grand Central); 560 Fifth Ave., at 47th St. (Subway: B, D, F, or V to Rockefeller Center).

Forman's is one of the oldest and most established discount sources in Manhattan; for decades they were famous for their stores on the Lower East Side. While they still have a store there, the company has changed its approach and opened stores in many key shopping districts—even on Fifth Avenue!

Forman's carries brands like Ellen Tracy, Ralph Lauren Polo, and so on, and sells petites, coats, some accessories, and other items. Forman's also sells a lot of Jones New York, a brand I like and often buy. This brand sells trousers for $119 in all area department stores. If you can find them at Loehmann's (see below), they sell for $89. At Forman's they cost $109—a mere $10 discount off the department store price. This is not impressive, but it's something. Sometimes they have end-of-season sales, and bargains get better, so it's always good to check. They also send postcards announcing special discounts and deals to those on the mailing list.

Note: All Forman's stores are closed on Saturday.

LOEHMANN'S

101 Seventh Ave., at 17th St. (Subway: 1 or 9 to 18th St.).

I've found that the quality of shopping at Loehmann's has improved enormously in recent years; either I've gotten lucky or things are looking up. Now I come here as a first stop in my downtown discovery tour of bargains.

Loehmann's sells men's and women's accessories and designer stuff. On my last visit, I was shocked at how many French brands were on hand—brands that as an American shopper I probably would not have known. Not that status is everything, but

I got things at a fraction of their Paris costs. There was also a good selection of plus-size clothes that were chic.

The store is clean, modern, and multileveled—and crammed with merchandise, so that racks bulge and items sometimes droop onto the floor. You might want to go first thing in the morning when you have lots of energy to explore.

The store has a very aggressive promotional policy, so you may be rewarded with discount coupons for further shopping dates, including discounts during the week of your birthday.

T.J. Maxx
620 Sixth Ave., at 18th St. (Subway: F or V to 14th St. or L to 6th Ave.).

This off-pricer is like a mini department store; it sells a little of everything—clothing for men, women, and children; underwear; shoes; luggage; home accessories; and bed and bath products. It even carries some big-name designers every now and then. My favorite finds here have been home items, dishes, picture frames, and gifts in the $10-to-$15 price range. For serious clothing, you have to be lucky—although there are clothes in all sizes and styles. Every now and then, I luck into lingerie or a nightie or two.

Slightly Out of the Way

Aaron's
627 Fifth Ave., between 17th and 18th sts., Brooklyn (Subway: N or R to Prospect Ave.).

A sign near Aaron's, a Brooklyn bargain basement that is worth the trip a thousand times over, says: "If your husband isn't in the business."

You do need to be organized to get to Aaron's, but it's far more worthwhile than the Lower East Side and certainly simpler than renting a car and driving to a factory outlet village in upstate New York or in New Jersey. Don't mind that it's 20 to 30 minutes away on the subway; it's worth the trip. The

Brooklyn subway station is clean and nonthreatening, and the 1-block walk from station to store is safe and simple. You may have hot flashes, though, when you get inside: The amount of stuff is a little overwhelming.

Aaron's has about 10,000 square feet of clean, well-lit space with neat racks and handwritten cardboard signs that identify many of your favorite designers. Stock is kept in the back, so if you don't see your size, ask, so that it can be brought forward. The sales help is nice; no one is too pushy. The tags are marked down 20% to 25% off regular retail, which might not be the bargain of the century, but there is a lot of stock and selection. Often, there are even further discounts.

The variety of names ranges from the traditional (Jones New York) to the expected to the big time (Adrienne Vittadini). Clothes I've never seen discounted elsewhere are sometimes carried here.

Aaron's opens at 9:30am, which makes it a good first stop. Leave your hotel at 9am, and avoid rush-hour traffic. Please note that the store is closed on Sunday; I went all the way out there and was heartbroken last time.

Directions: Take the N or R train (going in the Brooklyn, or downtown, direction), and get off at the Prospect Avenue Station in Brooklyn, which will put you at Fourth Avenue and 17th Street. Then walk 1 block east to Fifth Avenue. It's easy, and you can't miss it. Aaron's charges $5 to send a large package out of state. Its refund policy is posted.

CENTURY 21

22 Cortlandt St., at Church St. (Subway: W or R to Cortlandt St.); 472 86th St., between Fourth and Fifth aves., Brooklyn (Subway: R to 86th St. in Brooklyn).

Words fail me and my palms get sweaty when I think about Century 21. There is no question that this is one of the best bargain resources in New York. Though the merchandise in the Manhattan store was damaged during the attack on the World Trade Center, the structure was left quite intact and the store has been back in business for a couple of years now.

Century 21 sells name brands at discounts and, my friends, what names! I've seen some heavy-duty names at Century 21 (Armani, Lacroix, Prada, Sonia Rykiel, JPTod's) that I've never seen at Filene's Basement or anywhere else. They sell men's, women's, and children's clothing; linens; shoes; luggage; small electronics; and name-brand perfumes and cosmetics. Prices, for the most part, are 40% less than retail; they range from 25% to 75% off, depending on the item.

The women's underwear selection is pretty good, and there is a small department for plus sizes. The shoe department separates out the JPTod's from the normal shoes. They have few size 11s, but are well stocked through size 10. I am addicted to designer sunglasses, which I buy here for about $50 a pair (instead of $175). You can get European designer ties for $40 to $50 each (saving about $70 per tie), and you can even snag Annick Goutal perfumes. The perfumes and cosmetics are not discounted, but the store has an incentive system so that the more you buy, the larger gift coupon you get for purchasing any item in the store.

Century 21 has a department store kind of place in lower Manhattan in the financial district; it has a recently refurbished store in Brooklyn in the middle of real-people Bay Ridge, with a separate home-style store behind; and there's also a large store in Long Island.

KLEINFELD'S

82nd St., at Fifth Ave., Brooklyn (Subway: R to 86th St. in Brooklyn).

If you thought that Brooklyn was too far to go for a shopping expedition, consider that this store wouldn't be a legend in its time if some people didn't think it was worth the trouble. Kleinfeld's is famous for dressy-dressy clothes, and provides many a wedding gown. All sorts (and all lengths) of dresses are available, at prices from 30% to 70% off regular retail. One store sells wedding dresses; the other store (across the street) sells bridesmaids' dresses.

Directions: Take the R local train to Brooklyn and get off at the 86th Street station (at Fourth Ave.). Walk 1 block east to Fifth Avenue, then 4 blocks north to 82nd Street.

Loehmann's (The Bronx)

5740 Broadway, at 236th St., Riverdale, Bronx (Subway: 1 or 9 to 238th St.).

Note that this listing is for out-of-the-way locations of this store; the new Ladies Mile Loehmann's, in Manhattan, is listed on p. 310. Naturally, you've heard of Loehmann's and probably shopped in one of its many stores, but this Bronx store is its flagship, housed in a former ice-skating rink in a lovely section of the Bronx called Riverdale-Kingsbridge. You can't miss the structure: Its domed roof is easily spied from afar. While this Loehmann's is nice, it's not immensely different from the Loehmann's in your own neighborhood, and might not be worth the trip if you are visiting from out of town. However, I have found designer clothes in this store that weren't in other branches. Impossible to know.

The store itself is clean and spiffy, complete with benches for husbands to sit on and a Back Room, where the big-name designer collections are housed. There are other bargain shops, off-pricers, and discounters nearby so that you can make a day of it.

Directions: To get here by subway, take the no. 1 or 9 train to the 238th Street station. Exit onto Broadway and walk 2 blocks south. By bus, take the regular BX 9 to West 236th Street (at Broadway), Liberty Lines express bus BMX no. 1 (which runs along Third Ave. in Manhattan) to West 239th Street, or BMX no. 2, which runs up Sixth Avenue in Manhattan, to the same stop in the Bronx.

By car from the West Side: Drive north on the Henry Hudson (toll); exit at West 239th Street. It's probably easier to go from the East Side; just take I-87 North (Major Deegan Expwy.) exiting at West 230th Street or Van Cortland Park South (W. 240th St.), then head west a block or two to Broadway. For more specific directions, call **✆ 718/543-6420.**

Just for Men

Harry Rothman
200 Park Ave. S., at 17th St. (Subway: 4, 5, or 6 to 14th St.).

The old Harry Rothman store on Fifth Avenue is gone. This store, on Park Avenue South, is also known as "Rothman's at Union Square," and is run by Harry's grandson. There's quite a little collection of discount stores on this block, flanking Rothman's. This makes it convenient for women to shop while men take in the glories of Harry's, which sells discounted big-name designer clothes and suits. They have a wide variety of sizes, so any man can find the right fit. This store is near the **Green Market** (p. 193) and all the excitement at **ABC Carpet & Home** (p. 267) and Ladies Mile, so you can't afford to miss it.

Moe Ginsburg
162 Fifth Ave., at 21st St. (Subway: R or W to 23rd St.).

Moe Ginsburg is a one-stop discount department store. It has several different floors, so ask for what you want when you get there. Suits retail from $110 to $170. Shoes are on the fourth floor; tuxedos are on the third. This is a downtown location, so you can get to several other big discounters on the same day.

FACTORY OUTLETS

The factory outlet business has become so attractive (that means profitable) that many makers are overproducing perfect merchandise to fill factory outlets. This capitalizes on the designer's well-known name and expensive advertising campaign, which has already been paid for, and reaches a totally different segment of the market, so it doesn't compete with traditional retailers.

The prices in factory outlets are usually the same as at discount stores or department store sales—retail minus 20% to

25%. A dress that has a $100 price tag usually sells for $79 at a factory outlet. But it can sell for $50, and certainly will be marked down to $50 as the season draws to a close. The discount may vary on a per item basis, since irregulars should be less expensive than overruns.

Outlets may or may not offer a better deal than off-pricers. Generally speaking, an off-pricer has a better bargain than an outlet store, unless you hit a sample sale or special promotion. On the other hand, if you have the opportunity to spend a day at **Woodbury Common,** an entire city of outlets, you may indeed do all the shopping and saving you might ever crave.

There are several factory outlet villages in the greater New York area that offer different types of shopping to the eager public. I feel very strongly that no trip to New York could be called a proper shopping excursion without a visit to at least one of the outlet malls. If you're only going to one, there is no doubt in my mind that it should be Woodbury Common, but because of the high rate of tax in New York State, you'll find people who will argue for other outlet malls.

Secaucus Outlets

Secaucus has an industrial zone that's more or less devoted to outlet stores, but it's in no way similar to any factory outlet or discount village you have ever been to. This is true industrial space and has warehouse units, a few small commercial malls that fit the traditional outlet mall profile, and free-standing units dotted all over the place—you must shop and drive.

There are a series of showrooms; some of them are 20,000 square feet, new, clean, and well lit. There are no dumps here, but it's all urban sprawl. Of course, that's the point.

The outlets are separated into two main areas: **Harmon Cove** (20 Enterprise Ave.) and **Castle Road** (45 Meadowlands Pkwy.). I suggest you start at Harmon Cove because it's a mall and it has an information booth. The woman who was at the information booth when I recently visited was filled with ideas and

info—she gave out free coupons, and she knew which places were open, which places had good deals, and what was happening throughout the entire area, not just her little mall.

You can call toll-free ✆ **877/688-5382** or go to www.hartzmountain.com for the skinny on **Outlets at the Cove,** 45 Meadowlands Pkwy.

There are over 100 stores in the area as well as a nearby regional mall, **The Mall at Mill Creek,** which is a normal mall, not an outlet center. Buy while you're in the area . . .

Driving directions from Manhattan: Take the Holland Tunnel to New Jersey, then Route 1 and Route 9 North to Route 3 (this takes only a few seconds) and take the Meadowlands Parkway exit. You'll sort of dead-end; follow signs thereafter.

Public transportation: For New Jersey Transit, call ✆ **800/626-RIDE** for bus information and routes from New Jersey and Manhattan. There are buses from Port Authority.

Weekends away: Diehards who need serious shopping time can book any of a dozen local hotels. **Crowne Plaza Meadowlands** (✆ **201/348-6900**) has a room-and-breakfast deal for $99 and provides a free shuttle to the outlets. This deal is good for 1 night only and must be reserved in advance, subject to availability.

A few outlet survival tips:

- Never, never attempt to go to Secaucus and Flemington (home of Liberty Village outlet mall and many other outlet stores) in the same day, unless you are a masochist.
- If possible, avoid bringing young children with you.
- Wear comfortable shoes—you'll do a lot of walking.
- Carry high heels in a tote bag if you need them to get the right look for clothes you may try on.
- Drive if you can; it's worth the price of a rental car. I once saw bargains at the Eileen Fisher outlet that were so great that the trip more than paid for itself. Bring friends and share the cost of the rental or van.

- Know that the distances between the various warehouses are not that huge, but the area is bigger than Disneyland (and much more fun). Be prepared to move your car constantly—at least five or six different times.
- Try to eat at off-peak hours—there are not enough restaurants around. Or bring snacks. There is a food court in the Harmon Cove Mall.
- Know that regular hours usually are 10am to 5pm Monday through Wednesday, and Friday and Saturday; most stores are open until 8 or 8:30pm on Thursday. Sunday hours are noon to 5pm, so you don't get in as much shopping. Not every store is open on Sunday.
- Be aware that stores do move around and change. I couldn't believe the differences since I was there last. The best way to be on top of the changes is to use the free booklet "Secaucus Guide Book," given out everywhere and published by the Hudson Reporter. You can also go to www.secaucus outlets.com for advance planning.
- Know that weekends are very crowded; a weekday is preferable if possible.
- Read the locally printed broadside that is free at your first stop. There's also a map, so you can take some time to plot your day.
- Bring checks, because most stores take them and there's no hassle for out-of-state checks. You must have a driver's license and two IDs, though. Traveler's checks are accepted; some credit cards are taken.
- Read the carefully posted signs about return policies before you buy. The rules vary from store to store, but most warehouses allow returns within a 7-day period.
- Sign up on mailing lists if you want. Each warehouse has a mailing list, and they will honor out-of-state addresses, although they may not send to addresses outside of the United States.
- Don't judge a book by its cover. While all the outlets are clean, some of them have decidedly uncute names.

- Know that some venues and sales are seasonal. They are advertised with banners and signs.
- If someone is carrying an interesting shopping bag, ask questions. Discount shoppers love to help others.
- Do not assume a bargain or a best-price-in-town price tag.
- Go with a friend, and share the driving if you've come a long way. You will be exhausted at the end of the day, so reserve enough energy to deal with a long drive or traffic on the way home. This kind of shopping is more fun with a friend anyway.
- Be aware that there are kids' clothing outlets but no toy outlets. If you are bribing your kids into good behavior, bring your own bribery materials.

Woodbury Common

Woodbury Common has changed so dramatically in the last few years that I don't know where to begin. Woodbury Common was once extremely similar to **Liberty Village** (same developer), but the new additions at Woodbury Common make it so exciting that it cannot be compared to its sister in New Jersey. Or any other outlet village in the world. This is, hands down, the king. This place has more high-end stores than any other outlet mall. If you are an international visitor to the United States, you'd better take notes or videotape—your friends at home just won't believe this place. Bring your station wagon, bring your van, bring your pals. And for heaven's sake, bring your credit cards.

Eileen Fisher Announcement

If you are an **Eileen Fisher** freak, as I am, know that the outlet is as gorgeous as any store—and is huge and filled with stock! Regular price tags are on the garments, but each grouping has a sign attached to it saying how much to deduct. Worth the trip if you're loading up.

I guess the most important thing I should do is warn you that the area is now too big to do in a day, so you might want to consider spending a night nearby. If you get overwhelmed easily, do research when you arrive so you can hit the places that interest you the most.

Visually speaking, Woodbury Common is the most attractive of the outlet villages. Its core is a fake colonial village, and each shop (you enter from outdoors) is a different pastel shade—it's so cute that you may want to move in. The new additions are not as cute as the center part. They aren't uncute, they're just more economically built. With the new additions, the village has grown a little wild—it sprawls here and there and you could do well with a golf cart to get to all the outlets. Consider moving your car once or twice, although this is impossible on weekends and could be impossible any day—the later in the day it gets, the harder it is to find a parking space.

If you are choosing only one outlet village to visit, Woodbury Common is probably the one to pick. It's easy to get to and it's easy to shop. The drive to Woodbury Common is easy (on a gorgeous highway) and beautiful almost any time of the year, especially in the autumn. It takes approximately 1½ hours from Manhattan. Hop on the New York State Thruway (Interstate 87) and get off at exit 16. Almost immediately after going through the tollbooth, you will see the mall to your right.

If you are visiting from Connecticut, not Manhattan, you may wonder about the best route because of the limited number of bridges across the Hudson River. Again, it depends on which part of Connecticut you are coming from, but we saved a half-hour by using the Tappan Zee Bridge in our drive from Fairfield County.

There's free parking. But wait! The mall space is now so large that what I do is circle the entire parking lot looking at the buildings and deciding where I want to be. Get an overview before you get too excited, because if you are blinded by the first buildings you see, you might not even realize that there are other sections to this mall.

Bus tours to this outlet have become easier than ever, thanks to a program offered by Gray Line. You get the Woodbury Common–bound bus at 54th Street and Eighth Avenue in Manhattan. This means you avoid the Port Authority Bus Terminal, which many people feel is worth avoiding. There is one morning bus and two return buses each day; all riders get a discount coupon booklet. The cost is about $35 per person. Call Gray Line at ✆ **800/669-0051** or call 212/397-2620 for details.

There are more than 200 outlets in the village, including many big-name shops like **Armani, Burberry, Brooks Brothers, Cole Haan, Calvin Klein, Barney's, J. Crew, Gucci, Carole Little, Harvé Benard, Ellen Tracy, Ungaro,** and **Versace.** There are also brands that don't have a lot of other outlet stores, such as **Judith Leiber, Prada,** and **Chanel.**

There is an information center and a free map and newspaper upon arrival. There are several clean restroom stations placed at various intervals throughout the structure. Of course, there are places to have coffee or eat. What they really need is a hotel on the premises.

Hours are Monday through Saturday 10am to 6pm, Sunday 11am to 5pm. Open until 9pm on Thursday and Friday evenings from May 1 to December 31. Closed from 3pm on July 4, December 24, and December 31. Closed all day on Easter, Thanksgiving, December 25, and January 1. Call ✆ **914/928-6840** for information.

Jersey Gardens

Jersey Gardens is a relatively new mall that sprang up near Newark Airport and near existing superstores like IKEA, which already attracted shoppers from the tri-state area. The reason that designers, manufacturers, and retailers are fighting it out now is that the mall is very, very attractive and is drawing traffic from regular retail—several other Jersey malls report that business is down 20% in some categories, and they are furious.

This mall has more than one million square feet of shopping and includes a mix of outlets and value-oriented stores as well as restaurants, entertainment centers, and diversions to keep the whole family dizzy. In fact, it's more like an amusement park than an outlet village.

Most of the architecture is hot and spiffy, though some of the outlets are the bare-bones type. The style of the mall reminds me of malls in The Mills Group, which does not happen to own this mall. In total, there are 201 stores (as opposed to the 220 in Woodbury Common). All stores are indoors in this mall.

Among the tenants are several department stores with outlets, such as **Saks's Off Fifth** and **Neiman-Marcus's Last Call.** There are also off-pricers such as **T.J. Maxx** and **Daffy's.** For main-street brands, there's everything from **Gap** to **Banana Republic.**

There are shuttle buses from New York's Port Authority Terminal and from Newark Airport; the bus service from Manhattan doubles up on weekends, although the crowds do too. Call New Jersey Transit at **✆ 973/762-5100** for bus departure times.

Jersey Gardens is at 651 Kapkowski Rd., off exit 13A on the New Jersey Turnpike in Elizabeth, New Jersey.

STREET MERCHANTS

The street merchants in Manhattan are really best for beads and trinkets, and should only amuse you, not take your shopping budget. In good weather there's someone at every other corner selling a small selection of something—watches, sunglasses, handbags, books, pearls, ties, sweaters, and so on. In bad weather there are folks selling things like umbrellas, gloves, and scarves.

The quality of all this merchandise is suspicious, but if you take it with a grain of salt, you may find that the shoe fits. The

umbrella will last long enough to get you through the storm, the pearls won't turn, and the watches may work for quite some time.

Street hawking, especially of fake or counterfeit merchandise, is essentially illegal, so most hawkers are on the lookout for the police and will roll all of their merchandise into a ball and be gone in less than 30 seconds should anyone look at them suspiciously. Street hawkers are abundant or scarce depending on the police presence at any given time. They try to work popular areas and to attract visitors—Fifth Avenue, in midtown, boasts a fair number; Sixth Avenue in the Village (near Bleecker St.), and Lower Broadway (near Astor Place) are other good places to find street merchants. I've also noticed that there are more folks out on the streets on weekends than on weekdays.

When I really need something fake, I simply pop onto the subway and go to Canal Street, where prices and selection are superior.

Counterfeits & Imitations

If you're talking street merchandise, you have to be thinking of the most nontraditional retailing ploys of them all: counterfeit. Or stolen. Or merely "lost." The watches are no doubt counterfeit, while the sweaters may have just gotten "lost" from their original warehouse. It's so hard to keep track of all those trucks you know.

There is some room for debate as to when an item becomes a counterfeit, a copy, or a knockoff, and at what point it's illegal. If the intent is to defraud the true maker, the item is a counterfeit. Thus, all those $25 Gucci, Rolex, Dunhill, and Cartier watches that street merchants sell are counterfeits. It is illegal to sell them and probably illegal to buy them. There are waves of fashions in fakes—Chanel fakes are harder to find these days, while Dolce & Gabbana fakes are the rage. Coach is also hot.

Most brand names that are sold on the street are frauds, so look carefully at the way the signatures are made. Some Gucci

fakes look like Gucci's from afar, but careful inspection reveals that those aren't even G's in the pattern. That's not a fake. It's an attempt to take advantage of your bad eyesight or inattention to detail. But it's legal.

New York does not have the sophisticated counterfeits that can be found in Italy or Bangkok—most U.S. fakes scream "fake" and are just for fun. A few of them are cute enough as joke presents, even though they don't really look that much like the real thing when you inspect them carefully. I would never, ever give a fake and attempt to carry it off as the real item. Blatantly fake merchandise is rather easy to spot. It looks cheap, feels cheap, and may even smell cheap. Good copies take a more practiced eye:

- Know what the real thing looks like and feels like.
- Know if the real maker even has the same style. Those phony Chanel-style sunglasses sold on Canal Street? Sure they look cute, but as it turns out, Chanel sunglasses don't even come in that particular style! See those silly Chanel-style earrings that are studs for pierced ears? Chanel does not manufacture studs. And so on.
- Check the weight of the goods (good watches are very thin these days, for example), the texture of the fabrics, the lining, the stitching, the make of the label, the way the trademark is made. Real Ray-Ban sunglasses not only say Ray-Ban on them (as do the fakes) but also have little RB initials smoked into the lens near the temples. This is difficult or impossible to fake. Most big-name designer goods have the name of the firm etched into the mold for the hardware. It says Gucci or Hermès right in the brass. Fixings and hardware are good clues to fakes, even in terms of quality, if not in terms of engraving.
- Ask if the product comes with an ID card. Ho, ho, ho. Real designer goods now come with their own credit card–like ID card, some with a serial number. Even a tie at Prada comes with such an animal. They don't have ID cards in the Prada-style bags sold on Canal Street.

If you are purposely choosing an imitation, consider the light in which your fake will be shown. If all your friends have the real thing, and you are wearing the fake out to brunch, you'd better believe that sooner or later someone will discover your secret. However, if you are making a one-time appearance at the Oscars, or if your gemstone will be seen only by candlelight, no one will know the difference unless you tell. Do remember, however, that high-quality fakes are not cheap, and that inexpensive fakes always look fake.

SAMPLE MADNESS & SPECIAL SALES

A few designers and manufacturers keep their samples of items in an archive. They lend these clothes out to friends or family (many of the evening clothes you see photographed in society pages are loaners), but they do not sell them. Other designers figure that any amount of cash they can bring in is worthwhile, and realize that the cost of storing decades' worth of samples can get to be exorbitant. What to do? Have a sample sale! New York is home to so many sample sales these days that there's a monthly newsletter or two announcing them; New Yorkers are very proud of this only-in-New-York facet of the city lifestyle.

Once you have ventured forth to your first sample sale, you may find yourself a victim of "sample madness." You end up going to sample sales and buying things you don't need and may not even want—you just get carried away with the prices and the fun.

Many sample sales require cash, though some of the big ones take credit cards. Note that some sample sales are held in boutiques (**Eileen Fisher, Norma Kamali, Dolce & Gabbana**), corporate offices (**Fendi**), private parties or shindigs for best customers or fashion elite (**Chanel, Yves Saint Laurent**), or hotels (**Vera Wang**). Others are held at FIT or Parsons School of Design in their auditoriums (**Escada**) or at Chelsea Market (**TSE Cashmere**).

Sample Savvy

To get lots of details on sample sales, subscribe to the *S&B Report* (it stands for Sales & Bargains). Note that the subscription rate goes up every year; a subscription presently costs $75 a year for the online version and $124 for the print version. What you get in return is a monthly booklet with names, addresses, and short descriptions of what's for sale. For information, call ✆ **877/579-0222.** You can buy a single issue for $10 if you are visiting only once a year. You can also visit the website (which does have e-commerce!) at www.lazarshopping.com.

If you don't want to subscribe to the *S&B Report,* or you are just in town for a few days but still want to get in on the action, try these tips:

- Walk down Broadway or Seventh Avenue near the Garment District, and you will more than likely be given handouts touting a variety of sample sales.
- The best way to find a special sale or a sample sale is simply to ask. Call your favorite designers, especially in April and October, and ask, "Do you sell samples or extra stock to the public?" If the answer is no, you might next ask, "Do you have a factory outlet where you sell samples or extra stock?" It never hurts to ask.
- Read the local events magazines like *New York* and *Time Out New York*. Both announce many sales; *New York* has totally redone its shopping coverage, and bargain announcements and many sales are now listed each week.
- *Fashion Update* is a publication that competes with the *S&B Report;* call ✆ **718/377-8873** for details. Or click onto www.nysale.com, a free connection with thousands of sale listings. Then there's The Bargain Hotline ✆ **212/540-0123,** which charges $2 for the first minute and 75¢ for each additional minute.

- Watch advertisements in the *New York Times* for the latest sales; pay close attention around gift-giving seasons. Almost all big sample sales are advertised.
- Sign up for mailing lists, and ask about future shows.

And while you're at the sale, remember these tips:

- Try to avoid the lunch hour crush; get there when the doors open if possible.
- Whenever possible, try it on.
- Don't give a sample-sale gift to someone in a box from a real department store. The items are usually coded with a red X on the tag, so that people can't return them to the department store for full price.
- Don't buy something just because it's cheap.

USED MERCHANDISE

People often put perfectly good pieces of furniture out on the street for garbage collectors to haul away. Honest. I happen to have pieces of furniture that were rescued from the curbs of New York City.

Also, many people give their cast-offs to charity to get a tax deduction for the donation. Scads of thrift shops and charity-related stores sell previously worn merchandise. I happen to like the **Posh Sale** (p. 332) because of the high quality of the designer merchandise. I must note, though, that some of my younger friends—women ages 25 to 35—tell me that the clothes sold at the Posh Sale are too matronly for them.

Not to worry. These days, used clothing is so chic it's called "vintage" and even Saks Fifth Avenue sells it. For the young crowd, there are plenty of East Village sources and even flea markets for vintage. For those who want gently used designer clothes, there are resale shops galore.

Resale

Manhattan's resale shops are a special breed unto themselves, each with its own rules and regulations and secrets. Generally speaking, resale shops pride themselves on fashionable merchandise that is only a year or two (at the most) old. I find that well and good and applaud the notion, but excuse me, how come there are so many Adolfo suits in these stores? Adolfo has been closed for more than 2 years, so puh-leeze. All things considered, if you want to wear Chanel, resale is the only way to go. Well, it's not the only way to go, but it's the only way that I can contemplate.

Also note that with the revival of many '60s and '70s fashion looks, it's getting harder and harder to tell vintage from resale. Try both.

Designer Resale

324 E. 81st St., between First and Second aves. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

This place is small, but the clothes are frequently brand-new, and there are indeed designer names to be found. They sometimes have a color-coded sticker system that is a bit unclear, so that when you go to pay, the price turns out to be much less than you thought it was. Ask!

Hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 11am to 7pm, Thursday 11am to 8pm, Saturday 10am to 6pm, and Sunday noon to 5pm. There's a men's branch across the street.

Encore

1132 Madison Ave., at 84th St., 2nd floor (Subway: 4, 5, or 6 to 84th St.).

This store got attention about 30 years ago when it was rumored that Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis was turning in her used clothes here. I had been coming by here for years and finding zilch, and then suddenly, I hit pay dirt. Would you like to hear about the Yves Saint Laurent Rive Gauche dress for $90? For the last year or so, this has been one of my regular sources.

The first floor sells dressy gowns, shoes, and handbags, while the second floor houses more casual items. If you've ever dreamed of interlocking C's, this could be the start of something big: There are always a few Chanel suits priced from $500 to $750. A Chanel suit at $500 is really an outstanding buy, as the average price for a used Chanel suit is usually higher. (The average price for a new Chanel suit is $4,500, in case you were wondering.)

Open Monday through Saturday from 10:30am to 6:30pm.

KAVANAGH'S

146 E. 49th St., between Lexington and Third aves. (Subway: E, V, or 6 to Lexington Ave./51st St.).

This small shop specializes in Chanel and other big names, and has handbags as well as clothing.

MICHAEL'S—THE CONSIGNMENT SHOP FOR WOMEN

1041 Madison Ave., at 79th St., 2nd floor (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

Over the years, I've personally done better at **Encore,** but the last time I did some "thrifting" around the city, I had a ball at Michael's and got a whole new wardrobe for about $90, and found nothing at Encore. That's life in the big city. This store is close enough to Encore that you can hit both in the same trip.

Michael's has a lot of Chanel: suits (beginning at $800) and accessories. I saw a pair of red and white Chanel sling-backs that I'll never get over as long as I live—they were worthy of a museum. I'm shrinking my feet as we speak. They do have a lot of plain-old regular big-name designer goods that just keep on keeping on. Small sizes will do better than larger. They now sell wedding gowns upstairs.

Open Monday through Saturday from 9:30am to 6pm; Thursdays until 8pm. Closed Saturday in addition to Sunday during July and August.

A Second Chance

1133 Lexington Ave., at 78th St., 2nd floor (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

Located near other great clothing resources, this resale shop has the usual luck of the draw, with some designer names and some midrange names. You may find a Ralph Lauren, Mondi, or Adolfo label, or you may not. The store opens Monday through Saturday at 11am, Sunday at noon.

THRIFT SHOPS

Stores that specialize in upscale used merchandise consider themselves either resale shops or consignment shops; those that take whatever donations people choose to give in the name of charity are thrift shops, and they are usually run for the benefit of a specific organization. As a result, most schools, hospitals, and disease care and research organizations have their own thrift shops.

By definition, a thrift shop is only as good as you are lucky. It's impossible to review them, since the merchandise comes and goes, and one can never be sure. I've seen that over the years the thrift shop has become very popular—aside from the young people who are into grunge, there are plenty of well-off middle-class people who are looking for high quality at a worn price.

Do note that prices at these places can be very high, especially if you are used to out-of-town thrift-shop prices. A few basic rules hold true for most thrift shops:

- Many thrift shops take credit cards; few will take checks.
- You can sometimes bargain a little if you buy a lot.
- Most stores open at 11am; Saturday hours may be strange. Few are open on Sunday.
- A lot of thrift shops are located on the Upper East Side; I've grouped together several that make the expedition worthwhile.

- If you are used to the high quality and good prices at stores like Encore and Michael's, you may be turned off after checking out a few thrift shops.

There are some thrift shops that specialize in home decor, including:

CANCER CARE THRIFT SHOP
1480 Third Ave., at 83rd St. (Subway: 4, 5, or 6 to 86th St.).

HOUSING WORKS THRIFT SHOP
202 E. 77th St., between Second and Third aves. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.). 143 W. 17th St., between Sixth and Seventh aves. (Subway: F or V to 14th St. or L to 6th Ave.).

MEMORIAL SLOAN KETTERING THRIFT SHOP
1440 Third Ave., at 81st St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

OUT OF THE CLOSET
220 E. 81st St., between Second and Third aves. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

SPENCE CHAPIN THRIFT SHOP
1430 Third Ave., at 81st St. (Subway: 6 to 77th St.).

SPECIAL-EVENT RETAILING

An event just wouldn't be special if you couldn't buy something, would it? Museums have gift shops, circuses have vendors, and New York City has all sorts of special events that revolve around the selling of something or other.

The best of these events are charity-related, such as **Seventh on Sale** (usually held in May—watch the newspapers and magazines), when designers donate clothing to be sold flea market–style, with income going towards AIDS research. The shoe industry also does an annual bash, sponsored by QVC.

Some events are food-related—the Ninth Avenue Association has an annual block party that allows you to roam through throngs of people as you explore a variety of ethnic food stands. There are similar festivals in Little Italy; and there's Chinese New Year in Chinatown in February. Check with your hotel concierge or *Where* magazine to find out if such events will be held when you are in town. The Visitors Bureau also sends out a quarterly list of all special events in Manhattan.

Also investigate traditional charity events: For antiques and furniture, there's the twice-a-year sale at the Armory on Park Avenue at 67th Street (the Seventh Regiment Armory Antiques Show) as well as shows on The Piers (see p. 287 for more on these).

For clothes, try the **Posh Sale,** a benefit for the Lighthouse for the Blind, also held at the Armory. Twice a year, the great ladies of New York society clean out their closets (designers do this as well) and send their tired, their poor, their wretched excesses to the Posh Sale, where we are yearning for them to be free but will pay $30 to $50 for them. Check the Lighthouse for the Blind website at www.lighthouse.org or check magazine listings—there's a spring and a fall sale. **The Lighthouse** also has a very nice boutique with a combination of types of merchandise. Some are related to large type or large-size print for those who don't see very well, but many other items are more along the lines of what you would find in a museum store.

SPECIAL VISITORS

For a clothes encounter of the bargain kind, check for magazine and newspaper listings about special visitors from international retailing establishments. The British are particularly adept at flying to New York for a week, taking a suite in a midtown hotel, and visiting with private customers, to whom they sell at wholesale or rock-bottom British prices.

To become a private customer, one needs only sharp eyes—ads usually run in newspapers or selected magazines such as *New York* or *Avenue*. Tailors often employ this method, but so do manufacturers and even entire department stores. A representative from **Harrods** used to come over to sell from the store catalog on a regular basis. Now there's Harrods online for U.S. shoppers. **Chinacraft,** selling china and glass, comes to all major U.S. cities and takes hotel space for a few days. The hotels get a good bit of this business, so we've gotten into the habit of asking the concierge if any sales in the meeting rooms are open to the public.

My tailor from Hong Kong, **W.W. Chan & Sons Tailors Ltd.,** sends a team to New York twice a year; contact sales@wwchan.com to get on the mailing list. They make men's and women's clothing.

TRADE SHOW SHOPPING

Inveterate shoppers usually shun the standard shopping services and go on the prowl themselves, and trade shows are one of their favorite haunts. If you are prepared to do your Christmas shopping in July, your Halloween shopping in May, and your kiddie birthday shopping by the dozen, you can get some great bargains. You'll also save a lot of time in future months when all your friends will be frantic, and you'll be cool as can be.

Manhattan hosts almost 1,000 conventions a year. Not all of these will interest you, but events such as the **Gift Show,** the **Stationery Show,** and the **Linens Show** are not only fun to attend (you get a sneak preview of next season's wares) but also fun to shop. On the final day of the show, company representatives will often sell the samples right out of the booths rather than pay to truck the merchandise home. You'll pay wholesale, sometimes less. You may also get a lot of small-time freebies. Trade show shopping takes organization, storage

space, and extra cash resources, but it's the best way to save money and time and still give fabulous gifts.

To shop a trade show:

- Get a list of the week's trade shows from your concierge, a magazine such as *Where,* or the Visitors Bureau.
- Find out the last day of the show and the hours.
- At about 11am on the final day, go to the convention hall and fill out the papers for accreditation. Attendance at a trade fair may be free, or there may be a charge ($10–$25); either way, you must have some business credentials. This is what business cards are for.
- Your business card should be related to the business of the trade fair whenever possible; it should have some kind of company name rather than anything too cute. Your name should also be on the card. Have other ID, including photo ID. I recently had a very hard time getting into a trade show; they wanted all sorts of extra ID and business letterhead or checkbooks, and so on.
- Be prepared to answer a few innocent questions about your business, such as what you do. Having a gift-buying service or being in the party-planning business are two good entrees to just about anything.
- When you see something that interests you, introduce yourself—with your professional demeanor and company name—and ask if samples are being sold. If the answer is yes, pay in cash. No one wants your check. No one will change a traveler's check. No one has American money for euros. Cash and carry.
- Every now and then, before the last day of the show, you can get a maker to let you buy items for your own use—but you still must meet a minimum order. Sometimes this is only $100. Shipping will be extra.
- Bring heavy-duty shopping bags.

CORPORATE DISCOUNTS

Many regular, traditional retailers offer corporate discounts. **Tiffany & Co.** has one of the most famous corporate plans; if you qualify (you must be incorporated), you can get a discount (usually 10%) on all merchandise.

Some corporate discounts are based on location: A fancy jeweler on Madison Avenue gives a discount to businesspeople who work in the neighborhood—he wants their business. A certain camera shop offers a discount to photographers who work for Time, Inc., because he likes to tell his regular customers that all the *Life* magazine photographers buy from him. And so it goes.

If you are visiting your corporate headquarters, it pays to ask a local company representative which retailers offer corporate benefits. You just may be surprised at the choice.

HAIR DEALS

If you're young at heart and have a good sense of humor, little in your bank account, or just an adventuresome spirit, you may want to take advantage of some of the best deals in Manhattan: free or low-cost beauty services offered through training classes. Most big-name salons have a training night once a week or so; ask at your favorite.

CLAIROL

345 Park Ave., at 52nd St. (Subway: E, V, or 6 to Lexington Ave./51st St.).

Clairol is constantly testing its hair color products and processes. If you're looking for a new you, or need to have a terrible mistake corrected, call ✆ **212/546-5000** for an appointment.

VIDAL SASSOON
767 Fifth Ave., at 58th St. (Subway: N, R, or W to 5th Ave.).

Sassoon used to have a freebie night when apprentices could practice on you; now you pay a small charge. You have to agree to let them do what they want, but it's great fun. You can call for more info or show up on Wednesday evening at 6:30pm for a free consultation, when they will decide if they can use you. Then they make a regular appointment at which time you will pay $14 to $18 depending on your hair and the skill level of the technician.

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Greece
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Halifax
Hawaii
Hong Kong
Honolulu, Waikiki & Oahu
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Ireland
Israel
Italy
Jamaica
Japan
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London
Los Angeles
Maryland & Delaware
Maui
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Montana & Wyoming
Montréal & Québec City
Munich & the Bavarian Alps
Nashville & Memphis
Newfoundland & Labrador
New England
New Mexico
New Orleans
New York City
New York State
New Zealand
Northern Italy
Norway
Nova Scotia, New Brunswick & Prince Edward Island
Oregon
Ottawa
Paris
Peru
Philadelphia & the Amish Country
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Prague & the Best of the Czech Republic
Provence & the Riviera
Puerto Rico
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San Diego
San Francisco
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Scandinavia
Scotland
Seattle
Shanghai
Sicily
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South Africa
South America
South Florida
South Pacific
Southeast Asia
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